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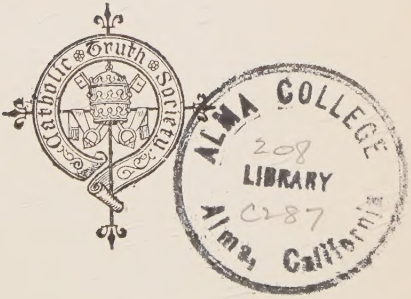
Publications

of the

Catholic Truth Society.

VOL. XXXIX.



LONDON:
CATHOLIC TRUTH SOCIETY,
69 SOUTHWARK BRIDGE ROAD, S.E.:
22 PATERNOSTER ROW, E.C.; 245 BROMPTON ROAD, S.W.

1898.

32000

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INTRODUCTORY LETTER

[*His Eminence Cardinal Vaughan, Archbishop of Westminster, has graciously allowed me to print this letter, as a preface to the following paper.*—T. E. BRIDGETT.]

ARCHBISHOP'S HOUSE, WESTMINSTER.
July 7, 1898.

MY DEAR F. BRIDGETT,—Your proposal has my most cordial approval and blessing.

[The proposal is that of endeavouring to associate the Angelus with the dedication of England to Our Lady and St. Peter, as it is developed below.]

As some small reparation for the national sin of apostasy and blasphemy against the Mother of God and her Divine Son, we Catholics of England owe to the Mother and Son most fervent love and service. In thanksgiving for the maternal care she has never ceased to show to us during these last desolate centuries of revolt and persecution, and particularly for the Divine grace which has proclaimed to the world that England is still her dowry, we are more bound than any of our forefathers to promote her honour and to extol her power.

And as we steadily approach the great struggle to take place between Christianity and the secularist and anti-Christian powers of the world, we shall more than ever need the intercession and protection of her, who of all God's creatures burns with the strongest desire for His honour, for the spread of the kingdom of her Son, and for the salvation of the souls for whom she was in labour at the foot of the Cross.

It has been said by the Blessed Grignon de Montfort

that "particularly at the end of the world, and indeed presently, the Most High with His holy Mother will form for Himself great saints who shall surpass most of the other saints in sanctity, as much as the cedars of Lebanon outgrow the little shrubs. They shall be singularly devout to our Blessed Lady. They shall fight with one hand and build with another. By their words and example they shall bend the whole world to the devotion of Mary. This shall bring upon them many enemies; but it shall also bring many victories, and much glory to God alone. It is this which God revealed to St. Vincent Ferrer, the great apostle of his age, as he has sufficiently noted in one of his works."

Everything seems to lead to one conclusion, that the Mother of God will be more and more glorified as time goes on, and that she is the most powerful and the most beneficent instrument of love and mercy ever fashioned by the hand of Jesus Christ her Son.

May your efforts to promote her honour be crowned with complete success.

Your faithful and devoted servant,

HERBERT CARDINAL VAUGHAN.

ENGLAND'S DEDICATION AND THE ANGELUS

SOME years have passed since the re-dedication of England to St. Peter and our Lady, and as that solemn act was intended to be of perpetual effect, and for that end to be yearly renewed, it may be useful to reconsider its nature, and to study the means to make it more effectual.

A PARALLEL.

The spirit of England's dedication may be illustrated by a very far-off event. The reader is asked to refresh his memory of Bible history; for human nature is so unchangeable, that what happened in Palestine seven hundred years before the Incarnation may well be a parallel to what has happened in England in the sixteenth and nineteenth centuries of Christianity.

Among the bad kings of Juda the name of Achaz stands pre-eminent. He reigned from B.C. 742 to 727, and brought disaster on his country. "The Lord humbled Juda," says the inspired writer, "because of Achaz, for he had stripped it of help, and had contemned the Lord" (2 Paral. xxviii. 19). The leading passion of this monarch was to destroy the worship of Jehovah, with its high morality, and to introduce the impure idolatries of the surrounding nations. To purchase the help of the Assyrians against his enemies in Damascus and Samaria, he plundered the temple of Solomon of all its treasures, put an end to the prescribed worship, and left the sacred building to be defiled by every ruffian and every beast (4 Kings xvi.; 2 Paral. xxviii. 24), though

he sought to appease by sacrifices the gods of his conquerors. Such enormous outrage to the God of his fathers and to his nation, can only be matched by the sacrilegious plunder and destruction of the glorious churches of England by Henry VIII. And it is notable that Henry found in Archbishop Cranmer the same ready tool of his destructive and constructive religious whims that Achaz had found in the high priest Urias (4 Kings xvi. 10).

When the wretched Achaz died, he was succeeded on the throne by his son Ezechias, who was in every respect a contrast to his father. His first act was to restore Divine worship. He cleansed and reopened the temple of Solomon, covered its gates with plates of gold, decorated and enriched it, and, gathering together whatever faithful priests remained, he offered sacrifices to Jehovah with all possible solemnity. God blessed his piety, and rewarded him with victories over his enemies.

I am not going to propose the temple of Jerusalem as a pre-ordained type of our Lady, though this I might do, since the Church salutes her as ark of the covenant and house of gold. Let us see, however, whether the reopening of the temple does not offer a natural and close parallel to the re-dedication of England to the Blessed Virgin and St. Peter. To the Jews the temple was much more than a splendid building. It was the keystone of national and religious unity, and the centre of Divine influences. Without the ark and tabernacle (and in its developed form the temple) the Jewish polity and worship cannot be conceived. The closing of the temple had been the suspension and breaking up of all that Moses had established, all that Jehovah had done or promised to His chosen people. In purifying, decorating, and restoring the temple to its former service, Ezechias was resuscitating faith, hope, charity, worship, obedience, and morality. May not the same be said of devotion to our Lady and St. Peter?

Those two names were not accidentally united. When England boasted of being the patrimony of St. Peter and the dowry of Mary, it was equivalent to saying that she recognized both the exterior structure

and the interior spirit of the Church of God. Of its exterior form the central bond is the See of St. Peter, and the Church's interior life is typified by the Blessed Virgin, and energizes especially in her devotion. "The law was given by Moses," cried St. John the Baptist, "but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ" (John i. 17). Our Most Holy Redeemer has poured out grace in copious streams, but its waters are deepest and most resplendent in her who was ever full of grace. The Head of the Church has secured the spread and the preservation of truth by many means, but principally by the gift of infallibility to the chair of St. Peter. Mary and Peter are the types of grace and truth. "Thou hast found grace," is said to Mary, and she answers, "Behold the handmaid of the Lord." "Thou hast found truth," may be said to Peter, for he exclaimed to Mary's Son, "Thou hast the words of eternal life." On the other hand it has ever been the instinct of heretics to narrow the limits of grace and truth. With them the teaching of the universal Church is no guarantee of truth, nor will they seek the bond of unity in the Church's hierarchy. Wherever the Church looked for grace they denied its existence. Children, they say, are incapable of baptism, and to adults it is but an external mark, like that on the sheep's wool. There is no forgiveness of sin by absolution; no priesthood; no sacrifice, and no real presence in the Holy Eucharist; no grace in marriage; no strength and consolation for the dying in extreme unction; no help for the dead; no prayers offered by the saints; no vision of God before the day of judgment, if even then. They are Christians who deny the grace of Christ, says St. Bernard, and thus their instinct of negation has led them to reject so emphatically the prerogatives of our Lady and St. Peter.

There has been more than one English Achaz to close the temple of God. Henry robbed the shrines at which he had once offered, burnt the images before which he had prayed, stripped the lead from the most famous sanctuaries, forbade the tolling of the Aves, because the Popes had indulgenced it. His daughter,

who bore the name of her who called Mary blessed, offered such outrages to our Lady's statues as were worthy of the brutal Copronymus. A Catholic gentleman named Rokewood, in the year 1578, had received and entertained the queen at great expense. When she was leaving he was arrested for daring to entertain her, as being himself under excommunication by the law. For further outrage it was pretended that a piece of the queen's plate was missing, and search was made for it everywhere. In the search a beautiful statue of our Lady was found hidden away in a haystack. The rest may be told in the words of Richard Topcliffe, the priest-catcher and rack-master, who was eye-witness: "After a sort of country dance ended in her Majesty's sight, the idol was set behind the people, who avoided (*intellige, lector*). Her Majesty then commanded it to the fire, which in her sight by the country folks was quickly done to her content, and unspeakable joy of every one but some one or two, who had sucked of the idol's poisoned milk."[1] If such infamies call for a blush, let it be given, not by Catholics, but by the upholders of the Reformation. Nor let the nation think to escape the infamy, while it continues to exact from its monarchs the public declaration that invocation of the Blessed Virgin, *as practised in the Church of Rome*, is idolatry. Who can qualify with fitting human words what has been the rejection of our Lady, and the contumelious repudiation of the Father of Christendom, which has accompanied it, for more than three centuries, *as practised in England?*

As then it was not youthful enthusiasm, nor mere love of ceremonial, but deep inspired thoughts, that led Ezechias to attach the religious and moral reform of his people to the solemn reopening of the temple; so also it was not mediæval dreaming that led Pope Leo XIII. and the English hierarchy to anticipate great spiritual good from the reconsecration of England to our Lady and St. Peter. If this dedication is sincere, thorough, and permanent, its fruit also will be great and manifest.

[1] For full accounts see Lodge's *Portraits*, ii. p. 186.

The Solemnity.

The parallel we are considering may be further extended, for on both occasions—that of the opening up of the material temple by the Jewish king, and that of the throwing open of the gates of our Lady's dowry by the English bishops—there was a great solemnity. That of Ezechias is related in the twenty-ninth and thirtieth chapters of the second book of Paralipomenon or Chronicles. The good king was filled with a spirit of charitable zeal. The descendants of Abraham had been split into two kingdoms. Only the two tribes of Juda and Benjamin had remained faithful to the house of David, and formed the kingdom of Juda, of which Ezechias was king. Over the other tribes, which formed the kingdom of Israel, Osee then reigned; but, in punishment for their immoralities and idolatry, they had been invaded by the king of Assyria, great numbers had been carried into captivity, and the land placed under tribute. Ezechias had no wish to take advantage of their weakness, to conquer and bring them under his own sceptre. He rather wished to save them from utter destruction by winning them back to allegiance to the God of their fathers. He therefore sent letters to the schismatical tribes as well as to his own people, inviting them to celebrate an extraordinary festival in Jerusalem. And the posts went with letters by the commandment of the king and his princes, to all Israel and Juda, proclaiming, according to the king's orders: "Ye children of Israel, turn again to the Lord, the God of Abraham and of Isaac and of Israel; and He will return to the remnant of you that have escaped the hand of the king of the Assyrians. Be not like your fathers and brethren, who departed from the Lord, the God of their fathers, and He hath given them up to destruction, as you see. Harden not your necks, as your fathers did; yield yourselves to the Lord, and come to His sanctuary, which He hath sanctified for ever; serve the Lord, the God of your fathers, and the wrath of His indignation shall be turned away from you."

Can these words fail to recall the language in which,

of late years, the sovereign Pontiff has so many times invited Englishmen to return to unity, and reminded them of the piety of their Catholic forefathers? The mention of Abraham, Isaac, and Israel by Ezechias was no idle phrase, nor were those names chosen at random. They were mentioned because God Himself when appearing to Moses, had declared Himself the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

It will be remembered how our Divine Redeemer, Jesus Christ, rebuked the Sadducees for not understanding, from those very words, that the patriarchs thus spoken of were still living with God; not simply held in remembrance, but living, their souls living, their merits living, their prayers living, the covenant made with them living, and God ever mindful of their descendants for their sake. This truth was never lost sight of by the better class of Israelites. It was now referred to by the faithful king, and later on it was the consolation of the holy youths cast into the furnace of Nabuchodonsor in Babylon. In the midst of the flames one of them prayed, "Take not away Thy mercy from us for the sake of Abraham Thy beloved, and Isaac Thy servant, and Israel Thy holy one" (Daniel iii. 35). So, too, our own bishops teach us to pray and to record before God's throne, in the monthly devotion to the Sacred Heart, the names of our national saints, kings and queens, and prelates, confessors, and martyrs. One of the greatest of our national crimes was to make light of the merits, and even to forget the names, of the saints who have run their course and won their crowns. The sovereign Pontiff, therefore, and the bishops exhort us, as Ezechias did the Israelites, to turn again to the "God of our fathers," to the God in whom they believed and hoped, whom they worshipped and loved; the God who made them what they were, and crowned in them His own graces with eternal glory. He will certainly pour out grace and glory upon us, in proportion as, admiring our fathers, sighing after them, glorying in them, invoking them, we seek to copy their examples, and in particular to emulate their devotion to our Lady and to St. Peter.

Come to God's sanctuary," wrote Ezechias, "which

He hath sanctified for ever." Though the temple of Solomon had been despoiled and defiled and closed by his own father, the impious Achaz, yet Ezechias did not forget how "the glory of the Lord had filled it" visibly at its first consecration, and how God, in answer to Solomon's magnificent prayer, had said to him, "I have sanctified this house, which thou hast built, to put My name there for ever, and My eyes and My heart shall be there always" (3 Kings ix.). After what has been already said there is no need to make the application of all this to God's higher temple, His immaculate Mother.

The sacred writer of the Book of Paralipomenon goes on to say: "So the posts went speedily from city to city through the land of Ephraim and of Manasses, even to Zabulon, whilst they laughed at them and mocked them" (2 Paral. xxx. 10). The world is ever the same. Was this eight centuries before Christ or eighteen centuries after Christ? The words speak of Palestine, but the change of a few localities would make them serve for a description of England in 1893. Some men cannot hear the word God, or the name of our Lady, or of a saint, or any mention of faith, devotion, or repentance without *mocking*. "A fool," says the Holy Ghost, "receiveth not the words of prudence: unless thou say those things that are in his heart. The wicked man when he is come into the depth of sins, contemneth; but ignominy and reproach follow him" (Prov. xviii. 2).

Not all, however, mocked the solemnity of Ezechias; some even of the schismatics went up to Jerusalem with the people of Juda, "and the hand of God was with them, to give them one heart to do the word of the Lord." So was it certainly in the great solemnity begun in the London Oratory on June 29, 1893, and continued throughout England on the 2nd of July.

Fickleness.

It is sad to read that, after the great example of Ezechias and after the wonderful deliverance from Sennacherib granted to his prayers, his own son, Manasses, apostatized, defiled the temple with idols, and

reduced his people to idolatry of the worst kind. What is there stable amongst men? We must not then rely on a glorious solemnity, however unanimous and sincere. The bishops have wisely provided for its renewal, twice every year, on the Sunday within the octave of the feast of St. Peter, and on Rosary Sunday. On this latter feast it is ordered that "flowers, as a tribute from our Lady's dowry, should be solemnly presented before the altar or statue of the Blessed Virgin."

It must be, of course, the great effort of the clergy and the faithful that this dedication may never degenerate into a mere external ceremony. We know that among the Jews, if there were some who despised the temple, there were others who placed in it a superstitious trust.

"The word that came to Jeremias from the Lord, saying: Stand in the gate of the house of the Lord, and say: Hear ye the Word of the Lord, all ye men of Juda that enter in at these gates to adore the Lord. Thus saith the Lord of Hosts, the God of Israel: Make your ways and your doings good, and I will dwell in this place. Trust not in lying words, saying: The temple of the Lord, the temple of the Lord, it is the temple of the Lord. . . . Is this house then, in which My name hath been called upon, in your eyes become a den of robbers?" (Jerem. vii.) A den of robbers! a cavern to which robbers resort to conceal and enjoy in security their ill-gotten spoils; such was the temple of God to the Jews, only about a hundred years after its re-dedication by Ezechias, until God allowed it to be destroyed by the King of Babylon in 588 B.C. Such, again, was the rebuilt temple of Zorobabel and of Herod to the degenerate Israelites in the time of our Divine Redeemer, when He predicted its final overthrow by Titus.

The more spiritual temple, the heart of Mary, can never be destroyed like the temple of Solomon. The malice of men cannot reach up into heaven; yet that august sanctuary may be at least partially closed to men by their own neglect and profanations. It is not pleasing to writer or to reader to make application of such reproaches as those of Jeremias to any devotees of our Blessed Lady. Yet St. Bernard, or a writer of not much

later date, when devotion to the Blessed Virgin was at its height in Europe, felt constrained to write as follows: "I tremble while I say it, O most clement Lady; thou art indeed the temple of God, yet men have made thee a den of robbers." (They seek to take refuge in thee from the punishment of their crimes.) "There are Christians who venerate the human Mother of Christ while they despise His Divine Father. They invoke thy pity for themselves, while they defraud their own servants of their wages. They honour thy virginity while they defile themselves with impurity. They weave sacred roses for thy head, and by their wicked words they pierce the head of thy Son with sharp thorns." However, if such reproaches as these were ever merited by the presumptuous, they were assuredly never intended either to diminish our Lady's honour amongst men, or their rightful trust in her power and mercy; and it is probable that at the present day more fail by distrust than err by presumption. Let this word then be enough on such a subject.

Stability.—The Angelus.

May it not be possible to increase the earnestness of our annual consecrations by some more frequent renewals of our loyalty? This is provided for by the devotions, monthly and daily, of the Archconfraternity of our Lady of Compassion for the return of Great Britain to the Catholic Faith. In addition to these I venture to suggest that the devotion of the Gabriel Bell or Angelus be not only propagated from end to end of the land, but be closely associated with the thought of our Lady's dowry. This is no innovation, nor the suggestion of an insignificant priest. It is the original scope of the devotion in its less developed form, at least in England. In the year 1399-1400 the Archbishop of Canterbury, Thomas Arundel, wrote to the Bishop of London, and the rest of his suffragan bishops, that "the contemplation of the great mystery of the Incarnation, in which the Eternal Word chose the holy and immaculate Virgin, that from her womb He should clothe Himself with flesh, has drawn all Christian nations to venerate her from

whom came this first beginning of our redemption"; but that "we English, being the servants of her special inheritance, *and her own dowry, as we are commonly called*, ought to surpass others in the fervour of our praises and devotions." He therefore enjoined that, as hitherto the devotion of the faithful had been accustomed to honour Mary at the ringing of the curfew, by saying the Lord's Prayer once, and the Angelic Salutation five times, so also henceforth the bell should be rung early in the morning in all cathedral, collegiate, and parish churches, and the same prayers be said. To those who should perform this devotion he granted forty days' indulgence.[1] Thus then in this, the first authoritative mention of England's title of our Lady's dowry, the homage of what we now call the Angelus was prescribed, not in one diocese only, but throughout the Province of Canterbury.

Of the beautiful devotion of the Angelus I will not here write, except to touch upon its history. It was of very gradual growth in the Church, and England may claim a large share in its earlier stages. The first stage was the ringing of a bell about eight in the evening called the Ignitegium, in French *couvre-feu* (cover-fire), in English changed into curfew. It is said to have been begun in England by William the Conqueror, and had certainly no connection with devotion of any kind, but was looked on as an oppressive measure.[2] It spread, however, into Scotland, and over the continent of Europe, the hour being changed to nine and even ten. But the Church soon converts to her own use whatever is innocent, and Pope Urban II. enjoined the saying of an Ave for the success of the Crusade, whenever the curfew bell should be rung. This devotion was encouraged or renewed by Gregory IX., and in 1269 St. Bonaventure exhorted the Friars Minor to propagate the evening Ave.

The second stage is generally attributed to Pope

[1] Wilkins. *Concilia*, tome iii. p. 246.

[2] ". . . the curfew bell
That spake the Norman Conqueror's stern behest."
WORDSWORTH, *Excursion*.

John XXII., who by his bull of May 7, 1327, enjoined the recital of three Hail Mary's at the curfew. But the unpublished Registers of John de Stratford, Bishop of Winchester, show that he had anticipated this ordinance. In 1324 he granted an indulgence of forty days to those who should say nine Hail Mary's, and for this purpose the peal was modified. His words (in Latin) are thus literally translated: "Our Divine Redeemer listens in His clemency to the prayers of the faithful who put their hope in Him, with especial favour when their devout humility is assisted by the merits of the saints, and especially of His most glorious Mother, our advocate, who repaired the ancient rebellion of the devil, succoured the misled world, and opened the kingdom of heaven, when by the Holy Ghost she conceived the Son of God.

"Desiring, therefore, to give cause to our diocesans to obtain those heavenly joys, we exhort you all that every day, when you hear three short interrupted peals of the bell, at the beginning of the curfew (or, in places where you do not hear it, at vesper-time or nightfall) you say, with all possible devotion, kneeling wherever you may be, the Angelic Salutation three times at each peal, so as to say it nine times in all," To those who comply he grants, "trusting to the mercy of Almighty God, and the merits and prayers of the blessed and glorious Virgin Mary, the blessed Apostles Peter and Paul, the holy confessors SS. Swithin, Birinus, Athelwold and Hedda, our patrons, and of all the saints, forty days *de injunctis vobis pœnitentiis.*[1]

The third stage was the addition of the morning Aves. I have already given the decree of Archbishop Arundel in 1400. He, however, introduced into England what he had seen practised on the continent. The Council of Lavaur in 1368 had ordered the church bell to be rung at sunrise, and recommended the recitation of five Paters in honour of our Lord's wounds and seven Aves in honour of our Lady's joys; while the Council of

[1] Given at Southwark, 10 Kal. June (28 May), 1324: in the Stratford Reg. MS. f. 5. I owe the knowledge of the original to Mr. Francis Baigent, of Winchester.

Béziers in 1369 enjoined the saying of three Paters and three Aves.

The fourth stage, or the introduction of the midday bell and Aves, is of uncertain date. Some attribute it to the influence of Louis XI. of France, in 1472, some to Pope Calixtus III. in 1456, while Mabillon and Benedict XIV. postpone it to the beginning of the sixteenth century.[1] Yet these learned writers seem to have overlooked a fact mentioned in the *Horæ B.V. ad usum Sarum*, printed in Paris in 1526, where it is stated that Pope Sixtus granted indulgences at the request of Elizabeth, wife of Henry VII., to those who should say the Ave three times at 6 a.m., three times at noon, and three times at 6 p.m., and that the Archbishops of Canterbury and York, with nine other bishops, on March 26, 1492, also granted forty days' indulgence for the same. The Aves were to be preceded by the prayer *Suscipe*, &c., "Receive the word, O Virgin Mary, which was sent to thee from the Lord by an angel."

Quite recently the Historical MSS. Commission has printed a confirmation of this fact, found in a *Horæ B. Virginis* belonging to the Corporation of Ipswich. It is the more interesting because it shows how clearly the nature of indulgences was understood in England, before Luther had begun his attack upon them; and also as an example how the word *pope*, and the very mention of *papal* indulgences were obliterated in the time of Henry, while episcopal indulgences were allowed to remain. I give it in its original spelling. "Owre holy father the . . . Sixtus[2] hath graunted at the instance of the Hyghemost and excellent Princesse Elizabeth, late quen of Englond, and wyf to our soverayne lyegh King Henry the seventh—god have mercy on their sowles and all crysten sowles—that every day in the mornynge, after iii tollynges of the ave bel, say iii tymes the hoole salutation of owre Lady, Ave Maria, that ys to saye at vi of the kloke in the mornynge, iii Ave Maria, at xii of the kloke att noon, iii Ave Maria, and at vi of the kloke att even; for every tyme so doyng is graunted of the spiri-

[1] *Benedict XIV.*, inst. xiii. p. 21.

[2] Sixtus IV. died in 1484, before the marriage of Elizabeth.

tuel tresour of holy Church . . . tociens quociens. And also our holy faders the Archebisshops of Canterbury and Yorke, with ix bisshopes of this reame, have grauntede iii tymes in the daye xl dayes pardon, to all them that be in the state of grace able to receyve pardon. The which begoune the xvi day of Marche, anno domini MCCCCC and iii[1] anno Henrici Septimi. And the summe of the indulgence and pardon for every Ave Maria ys viii C dayes and lx tociens quociens thys prayer shall be saide att the tolling of the ave bell."[2]

The last stage, in which the words Angelus Dei, &c., are interpolated between the Aves, and the whole closed by the prayer *Gratiam*, &c., was subsequent to the Reformation.

In England Henry VIII., the unworthy son of Elizabeth the Good, who had obtained the Pope's indulgences, was instigated by the devil for that very reason to forbid this devotion. He thereby showed, in his own way, how the patrimony of St. Peter and our Lady's dowry are closely connected. By an injunction of Thomas Cromwell, acting as Vicar-General of Henry, it was forbidden to ring the Gabriel Bell, not from any objection to the Angelic Salutation—for Gospel light had not reached that stage of its dawn—but, as was expressly declared, out of hatred of the Pope. "That the knolling of the Aves, which hath been brought in and begun by the pretence of the Bishop of Rome's pardon, henceforth be omitted, lest the people do hereafter trust to have pardon."[3]

Two more quotations will bring this history to our own times. In 1786 Bishop Hay published his *Pious Christian*. In this he says that the Church much encourages the devotion of the Angelus, both by its universal practice in Catholic lands and by the indulgences granted by popes "to those who daily and devoutly practise it, when the public signal is given. And whereas in this country we cannot have that public signal, they have extended the same favours to Catholics

[1] 1500 would be the fifteenth year of Henry.
[2] *Historical MSS. Com.*, 9th report, pt. i., p. 257. (1883.)
[3] Wilkins, *Concilia*, tome iii. p. 817.

in our situation, who regularly perform it three times a day, as near the time appointed as their circumstances will allow." In 1844 Dr. Wiseman (afterwards Cardinal) published in the *Dublin Review* his essays on Minor Rites and Offices. In one of these he treats most eloquently of the Angelus. "May the day be not far distant," he writes, "when at the same holy times there shall set up from every steeple, such a babbling of well-toned sounds as may represent the commotion of a believing city, on hearing for the first time the announcement of redemption from its Author come within it. There be the grave old men that seriously pronounce, in measured tones, their glad conviction; and there be the joyous little ones that lisp and prattle, and seem to disturb by their shrill din the solemnity of the event. And so shall there be the lordly tenant of the massive square tower, on abbey, church, or minster, that takes much to move him from his well-poised gravity, but who, when once set a-going, delivers himself of his speech in deep, sonorous cadences, which all must hear; and there shall be the puny occupant of the quaint, small turret over the cell or chantry, that jerks himself to and fro most briskly, and talks most volubly to every passer-by. And if their chimes combine not in harmony, their meaning will join in holy accord, and their mingled music will echo in the depth of every Catholic heart; and the murmured prayer will swell from many lips, and rise to heaven on the choral peal.

"But must we wait for the day? Why not make a beginning? In the first place, whenever there *is* a bell on a church or chapel, surely it fulfils not its office if it remains silent at those stated hours of common devotion. Let us ring boldly, in spite of ignorant inquiries at first; they will lead to knowledge. Let the congregation be taught to understand its summons and reply to them; and first a few, and then many, will join in the delightful prayer which it suggests. . . Enough, however; we have thrown out the suggestion, and we shall not despair of seeing it cheerfully adopted."

It is a century since Bishop Hay deplored that in Great Britain Catholic bells were forbidden; and it is

more than half a century since Wiseman, ever hopeful, said "Why not make a beginning?" No doubt the beginning had already been made in several places, and there are many Catholics now to whom the Angelus Bell has been a familiar sound all through their lives. Yet many hear it and think little of its purpose; they hear the bell, but say no prayer. Much remains to be done before this devotion becomes universally understood and practised. Now, in our endeavours to propagate it, may it not, without any further authorization, be associated in the minds of Englishmen with our Lady's dowry, and be made the acclamation of her lieges to their sovereign Lady? As such it was solemnly propagated throughout England in 1400 by our bishops; as such it was abrogated in England in 1536 by our felon king; as such may it spread and flourish in our own days and those of our successors.

To conclude with the words of the devout Cardinal Wiseman: "If the whole day cannot be seasoned with what would preserve it from corruption, let it, at least, be sprinkled occasionally with the salt of prayer. If the mystical number of the sevenfold office cannot be preserved, the no less consecrated and mysterious triad may be easily observed. And such is the Angelus: a short uniform, common, and in some sense public, but withal, in many respects, a personal and private devotion, within each one's reach, wherever he may be; not likely to interfere with any duty, or to interrupt detrimentally any occupation, yet having its stated hours, so as to constitute it a rite or compendious office of the Church. This view of it, independent of any other consideration, should make it be cherished and practised by Catholics everywhere."

Dedication of England to the Mother of God.

To be publicly recited on Rosary Sunday.

O Immaculate Virgin, Mother of our Lord Jesus Christ, Mother of Grace, and Queen of the Kingdom of thy Son, humbly kneeling before thee, we offer thee this country in which we live. It once was thine. Before it was robbed of the holy Faith, all its children were thy children, and thou wert honoured throughout its length and breadth as its Protrectress and its Queen. Again do we consecrate it to thee; again do we dedicate it as thy own dowry. We offer our own hearts, that their love and service may ever grow and increase. We offer all our brethren, those multitudes who know thee so little, or know thee not at all. May thy prayer bring back the country's ancient Faith. May thy intercession lead us to a closer union with thy Divine Son. We consecrate ourselves to Him through thee. Obtain for us, and for England, thy dowry, every grace and blessing, O clement, O loving, O sweet Virgin Mary!

V. Pray for us, O holy Mother of God.

R. *That we may be made worthy of the promises of Christ.*

Let us pray.

Holy Mother of God, Virgin ever blest, O Mary Immaculate, pray for us, intercede for us, disdain not to help us. For we are confident and know for certain that thou canst obtain all thou willest from thy Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, God Almighty, the King of Ages, who liveth with the Father and the Holy Ghost, for ever. Amen.

Dedication of England to St. Peter.

Publicly renewed on the Sunday after the Feast of SS. Peter and Paul.

O Blessed Prince of Apostles, Vicar of Christ, Shepherd of the whole flock, Rock on whom the Church is built, we thank the Prince of Pastors, who, in the ages of faith, did bind this country so sweetly and strongly to thee and to that holy See of Rome from which her conversion came. We praise and bless our Lord for those steadfast confessors who laid down their lives for thy honour and prerogative, in the hour when schism and heresy broke upon the land. We desire to revive the zeal, the devotion, and the love of ancient days. We consecrate our country, as far as in us lies, fervently and lovingly to thee. We offer thee our homage. We renew our loyalty to the Pontiff, thy successor, who now fills the Apostolic See. Do thou confirm and strengthen, by thy powerful intercession, the faith of the pastors and people who invoke thee. Save us from apostasy, from disunion, from religious indifference, and from the losses to which ignorance and temptation expose our little flock.

O most sincere and most humble penitent, obtain for us tears of true repentance for our sins, and a strong personal love for our Divine Master. O key-bearer of the heavenly kingdom, open to us the gate of heaven, that we may enter into the joys of the King of Glory. Remember this realm of England, which grew in grace and unity under thy blessed apostolic influence for nigh a thousand years. Pray to Jesus that all may see the light, and be brought back to thy fold, which is the One Fold of Christ. Amen.

V. Thou art Peter.

R. *And upon this rock I will build My Church.*

Let us pray.

Raise us up, we beseech Thee, O Lord, by the apostolic might of Thy blessed Apostle, Peter; that the weaker we are in ourselves, the more powerful may be the assistance whereby we are strengthened through his intercession; that thus, ever fortified by the protection of Thine Apostle, we may never yield to sin nor be overwhelmed by adversity. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

The Angelus.

The angel of the Lord declared unto Mary; and she conceived of the Holy Ghost.

Hail Mary, &c.

Behold the handmaid of the Lord: Be it done unto me according to Thy word.

Hail Mary, &c.

And the Word was made flesh; and dwelt amongst us.

Hail Mary, &c.

Let us pray.

Pour forth, we beseech Thee, O Lord, Thy grace into our hearts, that we, to whom the Incarnation of Christ, Thy Son, was made known by the message of an angel, may by His Passion and Cross be brought to the glory of His Resurrection. Through the same Christ our Lord. Amen.

A Prayer for England.

Contained in the Apostolic Letter of Pope Leo XIII. to the English People (April 14, 1895).

To the Most Holy Virgin.

O Blessed Virgin Mary, Mother of God and our most gentle Queen and Mother, look down in mercy upon England thy "Dowry" and upon us all who greatly hope and trust in thee. By thee it was that Jesus Our Saviour and our hope was given unto the world; and He has given thee to us that we might hope still more. Plead for us thy children, whom thou didst receive and accept at the foot of the Cross, O sorrowful Mother! Intercede for our separated brethren, that with us in the one true fold they may be united to the Supreme Shepherd, the Vicar of thy Son. Pray for us all, dear Mother, that by faith fruitful in good works we may all deserve to see and praise God, together with thee, in our heavenly home. Amen.

300 days' indulgence for each recital; and a plenary indulgence once a month, on the usual conditions, for those who recite it daily.

Spanish Legends.

BY THE REV. G. BAMPFIELD.

AN EASTER GIFT.

"YOU feel certain that she will recover to-day?"

"Well!" said my friend, a lady of Spanish descent, "'certain' is a strong word. I have a hope that borders on certainty, and with reason, as you would say too if you knew our family traditions."

"I love traditions," I ventured to say, as she paused.

"Ah! but you English believe nothing: the natural is true; what is beyond nature is false."

"Nay! nay!" I answered; "you are hard. What is not of faith is not of faith; but we do not deny that all may have been so done as Legends say, and certainly we do not refuse the truths buried beneath those stories, even if the stories be beautiful poems."

"Well!" she said, "I a little doubt you; but however——" and leaving the room for a moment she returned with some papers in her hand. "No ancient parchments," she said, "half destroyed by time and insects; those lie in our old

castle at home ; but I got leave to make a copy, as I did to bring away that Statue of Our Lady."

"To which you are so very devout."

"The original of course is at home, where it has a little chapel of its own ; you will see as I go on why I love it so much, and why I feel so certain that our good Sister Teresa will get right again to-day.

"Come, I must take you in fancy to my dear old country—noblest country yet in the world and truest to the Faith—over the Pyrenees to their southern foot and along the Bay of Biscay to that corner between the mountains and the seas, which is still holy with the Body of our warrior-Apostle, S. James—spot," she added proudly, "never trodden yet by the foot of infidel. Aye! but at the time of which this writing tells me all the country between the mountains of Asterias and the Mediterranean was in the hands of the infidel invaders. The day of deliverance was drawing near : Jayme, the first and greatest, warrior of lion heart, had just come to the throne of Aragon, and the spirit of the Christians rose as they saw the laziness of luxury which had come upon their conquerors. It was shame to have been overwhelmed by the first fury of the torrent which burst over them—it was greater shame now to dread sleeping waters which had changed from a torrent to a standing pool. The lord of our castle not far from Ovieto was one of the stirring spirits of the day, who fanned to the utmost of his power the fire of courage in the Christian hearts, and he had by his side a spirit more powerful, more dauntless, than his own, in the Lady Isabella of the royal blood of Castile—"We must not rest till we have driven the infidel into the sea." They took longer to drive than she thought, but nearer and nearer the sea they were driven by spirits such as her own. Joan of Arc, now the Venerable, has taught us how strong is the power of a brave woman who lives for God.

She was a thorough Catholic was the Lady Isabel, who did as well as talked, and her part in the sacred war was a life of stern self-denial. All the year through she cared for no softness: up from a hard couch betimes to Meditation and Mass and Office, she gave herself to the humble and diligent cares of a good wife and a watchful ruler of her household. Her luxury was to wait upon the poor; her joyous excitement to send forth her lord with his small following of soldiers to set free her country. 'Would that I were a man, that I might risk life and shed blood for a land which has been made holy by Mass and Sacrament and the dwelling of Our Lord!'

But if the whole year through her life was stern, doubly stern was it in time of Lent. Humble child of the Church as she was, she fasted because she was told to fast, but besides that she had a singular devotion to the feast of Easter. You are smiling; all Catholics, you mean, have a love for Easter; but hers was a wonderful devotion beyond what is seen in most, even of the good; and as part of the devotion a loving trust she had that, as Easter after Easter came, it was not only a triumphing in the Resurrection of Our Lord, but a present re-awakening of new life in numberless hearts, and a fresh up-springing of many of God's interests on earth. Each Easter Day was a resurrection of the sleeping Christ, not in His own Person, but of Christ in His members, of Christ in His Church. "See!" she would say, "it is Spring, and the flowers and trees and fruits of the earth are rising again; it is Easter, and souls are rising from death, many in the Font, many in the Confessional; and so it will be with my country; it is dead, but it will rise again;—for Good Friday and Easter Sunday—death and resurrection—must go on till the end of time." It was the talk of enthusiastic love; but there was truth in it, and she was confirmed in her hot Faith by more than simple prayers. Here is one instance which I will read you, written by her own hand in the ruder

Spanish of those days; it is part, as it would seem, of a letter to a friend.

'I have had for many years one great grief, as you partly know, a terrible grief such as not I alone amongst mothers have felt in this country of many sorrows, which has lain in the tomb blood-stained and disfigured so long. It was a grief without comfort or hope: and yet I must not say this—for it was Our Lady's own grief, the loss of an only son. The loss not by death—I would scarce have counted that to be loss—but it was in this way. Not here—infidel feet have never trodden here—but miles away towards the east where the great river'—she means the Douro, I think—'first bursts from the mountains, I was at the work I love, visiting in my cousin's castle to arrange with him for my husband part of our early plans for setting the country free. Poor Rafael—he was then a fine lad of fourteen, full of delight at the new country, the gushing river and the wild hills—wandered out with only a companion or two, not fearing danger. He never returned to us. Search was made in every direction, but the only news was sad news; that a party of the infidels, suspicious—I do not blame them—of our designs, had been roaming about, and that in all likelihood he had been carried off by them. A great grief, as you will think: he was but fourteen, poor lad: the slavery of the Moor, stern to the roughest peasant and the hardiest mountaineer, would be many times sterner to him, though our palace is no place of luxury, nor we the proudest amongst our country's nobles. What I have dreaded was that he still lived, had become a favourite—as his dear handsome face and his winning manners would make him anywhere—and had perhaps—the Saints forbid it!—made his yoke easier by being false to the Faith: dead with a three-fold death; dead to us his friends; dead to his country; dead to the Church and God. Had it not been so, I argued, they would have sought us for a ransom; for they love

money at heart much better than blood. You have caught me weeping sometimes at my prayers: you have wondered why the Altar I loved best was the Altar of Our Mother of Sorrows: you know now why I wept. And yet I always prayed with a hope. I felt sure that Easter would come: there was no sign of his bodily death so that he could not come; and I kept telling Our Lady'—the poor mother speaks simply, does she not, like one who lived amongst the Saints—'that she had seen a Resurrection, why might not I? Year after year passed on, and yet my hope did not die; I suppose a mother's hope is hard to kill; and Easter followed Easter and no resurrection of my boy. Still I prayed on.

It has come at last. The early Mass was over on Easter Sunday, and I had come back from my Communion and was still urging my old cry to our blessed Mother, congratulating her upon her Easter joy, and asking if she had none to spare for me, when Elizabeth—you know my little handmaid, Elizabeth—came in with a half-frightened look, 'a soldier, my lady, craves audience.' A soldier! a Christian? 'He must be, my lady. I found him in the hall with his head upon the ground before Our Lady's Statue. I was startled at first, and thought that he was one of those who love the wine-jar too much, but when he rose he spoke so gently and looked so humble that he soon put away my fear. 'May I see the lady of this dear castle?' he said.' A strange fear-joy came into my heart as she ended. Was my Easter come indeed? The fear was lest the hope was false, and the sorrow might fall back doubly-weighted. Aye! and it was so: false—false—that could not be he; not that sad face, haggard and danger-worn, sunken cheeks and starting eyes—it might be from hardship, it might be from revel and loose life—not that my boy Rafael. But the grief lied to me; it was the joy which was true. 'Mother!'—and it was my boy's voice, if years had deepened it—'your blessing and your pardon.'

'Blessing,' I sobbed, 'Rafael, blessing always, whatever you have done; but pardon—I must know first what wrong has been done which needs it. But come, you are travel-stained and weary—you must have watched and journeyed all night. Let us visit our dear Lord for a moment and thank Him and His Mother, and then your mother shall do for her risen son what she used to do twenty years ago—wait upon him as he sat at table.' Tears came into his eyes and I knew he was my true old boy still. 'No,' I said, 'not a word till you are less weary; you shall tell me your tale bye and bye.' Well! I am making a long letter of it: but it is a great great joy; I cannot tell you it in a moment.

Can you understand how I dreaded to know the truth? I was not sorry that his weariness first, and then the need of going to High Mass, put off the telling; at last it was by slow degrees it came. 'Yes! he had been carried off as they had rumoured, and at first treated with many blows and much hardship—they wanted me to tell them all I knew. They thought I knew about the plots of our people to win back the land. I was glad that I really knew nothing, but they would not believe me, and at last I told them all sorts of out-landish fables. They were shrewd enough to see this; and little by little they left off teasing me, and I became a favourite in my master's household.' 'Did they make you work?' 'Oh! didn't they: of course I had to work, and I thought it the was the best way to put a smiling face upon it all.' 'Did you ever try to run away?' He shook his head: 'No use; they kept so strict a watch upon me, and then I had no notion of which way to run. It was as far as Cordova, a trifle beyond, that they took me. I spoke of ransom, but they didn't seem to care about that; in fact they had taken a liking to me, and so half-slave, half in the family, there I had to stop. I didn't forget you, mother, nor the old castle at home; and many has been the day in early times that I

cried myself to sleep thinking I should never see you more. Then I got used to it and I didn't fret quite so much.' 'And the old Chapel, and the Altar, and the Statue that you and I used to visit together?'—I took his hand as I asked the question I dreaded to put—'My boy did not forget his faith and turn infidel?' He hung down his head and was silent. 'Pretended to, mother,' he said at last; 'this is what you have to forgive: no, I didn't forget the old Faith, and I did not believe in their lying Prophet; fool and coward that I was, I did for comfort and ease and good-fellowship pretend to pray like a good Mussulman, and keep their fast and feast with them—never really, mother, never really—God forgive me.' Then I knew, my dear friend, that I had an Easter indeed, and that my Lenten prayers were heard.

'And how did you get away?' I asked, fearing he might be too sorrowful. 'I did not deserve it,' he said; I did not deserve it; but my good Patron S. Rafael, must be as tender to me, as you, my own mother; he kept me and guided me in the woods and the mountain passes.' 'And why did you not deserve the strong Angel's help?' 'Because I still kept up my pretence of being an infidel, lest they should stop my flight. My master was very fond of me, and indeed I liked him; for an infidel he was kind and just and generous, and trusted me in all matters of business, for I used to work for him and brought many an affair to a good ending. He brought me up from Cordova and put me in command of a galley of his which was to carry goods for him to Majorca. Well! mother, you know what a swimmer I was as a boy, and how frightened you used to be when I went off a long way in the rough waters of our northern bay. Of course swimming off the east coast is like swimming in a pool in comparison: the waters sleep there like the luxurious infidels themselves. I tired our fellows with rowing, for they are not the hands at the oars which the Christians

are, and then at night I quietly took the galley out of its way, nearer the shore, where I knew the Christian troops were gathering to enter Valencia. I had a good swim—of some miles it seemed—and I was glad enough when my feet touched ground. I wonder what became of the galley, poor fellows, they were all asleep when I slipped away.'

'Your troubles were all over then?' I asked. 'Anything but over, mother. I had only a general notion that I should find the Christian troops northwards; and where lay the north, I judged by the stars. But I was driven into the forest, for I soon found there was danger by the coast; and I knew that a runaway Christian slave would find small mercy if he was taken in his flight. So into the woods I went, giving myself to S. Rafael, and after wandering amidst the mountains for two whole days I came in the early morning upon a small encampment of Christian soldiers. I went boldly to their sentinel, gave myself up and asked to be taken to their Captain. And who do you think it was, mother, of all men in the world? He didn't know me, not a bit, and he was cross to me at first and suspicious that I was a Moorish spy, playing tricks upon him: but I fell on my knees and looked up in his face, forgetting how much I was changed, and said 'father, your blessing. I am your boy, Rafael. Tell me of my mother,' I said, 'and of all in the dear old castle.' I never knew till then, mother, that my father could cry. I had remembered him stern.' I think my friend, that Rafael had remembered right. The sorrows of our country, the stern resolves that were in the minds of our leaders, were written on their looks and in their ways.

'But he wept now, Rafael?'

'Yes, mother; before his officers and his soldiers he broke down, and I do not know how long the painful scene might have lasted, but scouts came running in telling us that a few troops of the Moors were abroad, and before I knew where I

was I had donned the clothes you see me in and was in a hand-to-hand struggle with the infidels. I scarcely knew how I bore myself—it was my first fight, and my masters had not trained me much to the use of arms, and the sword of Castile was not the scimitar I had handled. But my father, when all was over, and we had chased the infidels down the mountain side, told me I had borne myself bravely, and that the Moors' indolence had not eaten out the old Spanish vigour, and he made me rest a day or two to nurse a little scratch, and then sent me on to you.'

'And here will you stop, my son,' I said, 'till you have seen the good Chaplain and made your full peace with God and the Church, and then back to your father, to atone for your pretended treason to the Faith, and to help in winning back our land.'

'So he is gone, as I write, a soldier of the Cross. And now will you blame me if I look for other gifts on other Easters?—for my son is twice risen, from the captivity by even the pretence of apostacy, worse than the captivity to the Moor, worse than death; from the death of the soul, to the Moor.'

. . . . .

My friend folded up her paper. 'And the Statue?' I asked. 'Oh!' she laughed, 'there are plenty of legends left to tell you—but one at a time is enough for your English Faith!'

OUR LADY OF THE CAPTIVE.

I was pleased with my Spanish friend's Easter Legend, and it was not long before I paid her another visit.

'It is she indeed,' she said, answering my look of surprise :—'I told you Teresa would throw off her sickness on Easter Sunday ; but not even I expected to have her up and on the sofa so soon. You see Our Lady has the very best plants Pedro could give us, and a new lamp before her as a thank-offering ; is it not pretty ?' And Teresa smiled agreement with her sister's praises, and a little fun at my wonder, as she held out her hand.

'You had a legend to tell me about the statue'

'Well, infidel ! if I can find it, for our family papers are full of like histories, I will read or tell it you,' and leaving the room she returned with even a larger pile of documents than on the former day. 'Here it is at last,' she said, 'but first tell me, do you notice anything unusual about the statue ?'

'Of course,' I answered, as I looked more carefully at the figure, rough somewhat and not, as a work of art, by any means first-rate ; 'the subject is unusual ; 'Our Lady of the Captive,' I should call it. Yes, it is striking ; the Mother holding the Child in her arms towards the captive who is lifting up chained hands ; the thought of the artist is beautiful, and most true.'

'Is that all ?' she asked, in a tone of disappointment.

I raised my eyes from the kneeling figure to the Holy Child, who was blessing the captive with a look of tenderest pity, and then to the face of Mary ; and though it was but a copy and the original was clearly of rude workmanship, yet as I met, if I may so phrase it, the eyes of the statue, they seemed to look into mine with a look of earnest longing almost beyond the power of artist to depict, and to arouse in

me by that loving look a contrition, an indignation that anything of the mean and contemptible should have strength to hold me captive.

'There is a strange power in the eyes,' I said, 'unless I fancy ;' it must have been written on my looks, for both my hostess and her sister clapped their hands and laughed with a satisfied glee.

'Yes! the old tale! what everyone has said from long centuries ago till now. 'Our Lady of Spain,' we call it. Look well at the captive figure. It is European, though not of the fairest type of European nations, and in feature and dress it is a female. It is Spain bound by the infidel's yoke, captive to un-Christian power.

'And Our Lady loves Spain,' I said, 'and is longing with a great longing to set the captive free.'

'Yes,' was the answer, 'but that is not the only captivity from which Our Lady of Spain——' 'Our Lady of the Captive,' I interrupted. 'Ah, well! if you will have it so ;—from which Our Lady of the Captive gives freedom ; from the time when first that image was with us—and it is said to have been copied by the untutored artist from a night dream—from the very first time that yearning Mother's look in the face has had a power over the sinner, or the struggler with fault, to awaken an earnestness of contrition scarcely known before.'

'It is strange,' I said ; 'but is that all your legend ; that it was fashioned by an unknown artist of no modern school from a sleep-vision in the night ?'

'Oh! no,' she answered, 'we shall find among these papers an Easter story that has to do with our dear Madonna,' and as she spoke she made a loving rearrangement of the flowers and took away a leaf here and there that was losing its freshness. 'Listen!' and she picked out some pages from her manuscripts. 'It is a little later than the time of our last

Legend, when the recovery of our dear country was much further advanced, and Spain was beginning to be no more a land of Moors with a handful of Christians, but a land of Spaniards with a handful of Moors. Town after town, province after province, had fallen back into our hands, and some of those who could claim descent from the older and wealthier families of Spain were beginning to search what hope there might be of entering again upon lands or homes that had once been in the hands of their Christian forefathers. It would seem that some branch of our old family had, or thought it had—in those very early times before Count Julian, as it is said, revenged the wrong of one man to himself by a wrong brought upon a nation for centuries—in those early times we had land in a southern village, and when the invaders burst upon us, with their hatred of all things Christian and their special hatred of images, this image was, in the hurry of flight, buried in some secret place, and exactly where none knew.'

'Then,' I said, 'the kneeling figure cannot mean Spain, for she was not yet captive to the Moor.'

'True,' she answered, 'and the first thought of the artist therefore was probably the slavery of sin, or the bodily slavery actually inflicted on so many Christians and Christian states by the Moslem. Certainly the statue has marvellous power in producing contrition : and especially, I must add, contrition for apostacy from the Faith.'

'I don't wonder that the Devil hates images so,' I said ; 'and what with the Eastern image-breaking Christians, and Mahomet, and then Protestants, he has never left them alone : clearly they rob the great thief of some of his souls : but I stop your story.'

'Well ! the head of our family in those times was one Don Enrique and his wife Donna Catalina, and when the news came of the submission of Zagra, (so the place was called,)

they sent a body of searchers to see if the statue could be found in the spot which tradition and some old documents marked out as, if not the exact place, somewhere near it.'

'Of course the finding of the Statue would prove the property theirs?'

'How like an Englishman!' laughed my friend, 'that's exquisite! You cannot dream that Christian nobles could want the statue for its own sake—Our Lady was to be made useful as a title deed! No! you unbelieving Saxon! it was the image, not the paltry piece of ground, the good pair wanted. Poor Catalina! enough to make her turn in her grave.'

'Well!' I pleaded, 'I know they got the Statue, for you have the copy of it there: I only hope they got the ground with it.'

'You shall hear. This which I hold in my hand is the report of the Commissioners to Donna Catalina herself. 'We have searched, Madam, in every spot for the Image of which the old deeds speak, but in vain; and begin to fear that the infidels have found and destroyed it. Both houses and garden have been very much changed, so that we cannot recognise the place as it is drawn in the old document which you showed us: we think the site of the house has been altered, and that much land has been added to the small stretch of ground which lay around it. We shall not, of course, give up the search, but we doubt the wisdom of going on with it now. For almost as we write news has been brought of a severe defeat received by the Christians from the infidels, and that the enemy are on the road to re-take this place. If therefore, we drew the image now from its tomb, there would be much danger of its falling again, with ourselves, into the hands of the enemy.'

The answer of the good Countess was quite in favour of searching no more till all danger was past of the image being

found by the Moslems : 'we will wait patiently for the day to come when our dear Madonna shall leave her tomb. You know how always among us here we look for special blessings, if not on Easter day itself, at least at Easter time, and a great happiness indeed it would be, worthy of much prayer, to have back amongst us the image of Our Lady which has struck off so many chains.'

'But Our Mother's loving child had long to wait. The Moor won back the town ; and once more house and grounds, in which somewhere the statue lay hid, were in the hands of enemies who would have shattered it into fragments. Still Catalina prayed on. It was a pain to her that her dear statue should be so left dishonoured, and her Mother dishonoured in it. Our Lady must free captive Spain, and freed Spain should set free the captive Image. But time passed, and it is not till the sixth year after the failure of the first search that we find a letter, not from a commission, but from Count Enrique, her husband, which speaks of the Image. It is dated from Zagra and from the house which was said to have been a southern residence of the family in olden times. Thus it runs :—

'It was not our own choice to fight on Easter Day, but the enemy compelled us. Hunger had driven them to despair, and they thought it an easier and nobler death to fall by the sword than to wither away from famine. In the early morning the whole body made a mad sally from the gates. If furious hate could have given strength, they might have borne down all before them : as it was they were a feeble foe, and they soon fled from the death they sought ; they fled, but we who had eaten while they fasted were quicker as well as stronger and we entered the town with them : it was ours. Lucky for them that it was Easter Day ; if we could not help fighting we had small stomach for butchering on such a day, and the soldiers willingly obeyed when I

commanded that none were to be killed unless they resisted. So with little bloodshed, and scarce the loss of a man on our side, your town of Zagra has risen to new life, and in it not a few Christians have been set free from their slavery.

'But I have still more news for you that will make you very happy. What think you, Catalina? I write from the house and grounds which belonged, as you will have it, to our far-off ancestors in the times before the Moors desecrated this Christian land. It is still one of the largest and best places in the town, and the most fitting house I could have, we all agreed, for our head quarters.

'I always used to joke you a little, Catalina, in my wickedness, about your Madonna; but what think you? You know how we searched for it in vain years ago: it was nowhere to be found. This happy Easter Sunday it has come back to me of itself. The first thing which I saw when I entered the biggest room was, facing me—amidst all the Moorish devices and finery on the wall, amidst Arabic writing and Infidel emblems—Our Lady of Spain, as you will call her, looking on me with those eyes of stirring pity of which you have so often told me. She was not without a worshipper; before her crouched, in Moorish garments, one who, when we looked upon his face, was neither Moor nor Moslem by birth. He had been the owner of the house, a renegade who had given up his Faith. No coward was he: many a sally he had headed against us during the siege, and his hands had been red, I fear, with Christian Blood. But—this he told us with many tears—searching, when he found the place could hold out no longer, and that there was no hope of help from Granada, or from Africa, or anywhere, searching for a place in which to hide the ill-gotten treasures which, if they could not be his, should not, if he could help it, be ours; he came at a little distance beneath the ground on rough steps leading down to a sort of vault or cave—just as your old Manuscript

tells us—and there fronting him from a stone niche in the wall he met eyes, though the eyes of a statue, fixed upon him with a look which, as he said, seemed to enter his soul and break it to pieces. Back swept the Faith again and took him captive; just, to use his own words, as your faithful soldiers have swept out of your mountains and your fortresses and hold Spain again; and flinging away his Moslem faith—if indeed he had ever believed it—he knelt in tears, a Christian, in true repentance, at his Mother's feet. Then he took the Image tenderly in his arms and bore it to his best room and placed it where we found it, just as the shouts in the town told him that Zagra was given back to Christian hands.

'So, Catalina, you have in truth a day of Resurrection on this Easter Day—a town recovered from its bondage; your own dear image risen from its tomb; and a soul, which was indeed dead, alive again.'

'And now,' added my friend, as she turned and kissed the Madonna's feet, 'you have learned one reason why we all have an exceeding fondness, a most loving devotion, to Our Lady of Spain, Our Lady of the Captive; Our Lady who brings repentance to the sinner and return to the Apostate.'

OUR LADY OF GRACE.

I HAD not seen my Spanish friends for months. Partly they had been absent renewing, as they said, their fervour at the sacred land of their birth—after Rome, they would have it, the Holy Land of Europe, sweet beyond other lands with the perfume of the Faith, land of S. James, first Missionary Apostle who was also first Martyr Apostle, land whose children cast forth the Infidel and ever drive back, rock like, the waves of heresy as beseems the sons of the first Martyr Apostle, land which sent forth its missionary legions to conquer India and the new found worlds to the faith as became the sons of the first Missionary Apostle—beyond doubt the touch of that dear land had given them new heart and life, as in the old-world fables the embrace of his mother Earth renewed the giant's strength.

"And your dear Lady of Spain, or Lady of the Captive as I must have the statue called, was it a companion of your travels?"

"Yes," she said, "she went with us; she has been upon a pilgrimage of pity, not unfruitful. But do you notice anything new in it?"

Thus invited to look at the image more closely, I raised my eyes to the face of the Madonna, and found as before her eyes fixed on me with that wistful longing expression of pity, which would have been remarkable in a picture and was still more so in a statue.

"That well nigh miraculous look of pity has lost none of its mystic power, its power of speech, for surely such it is," I answered; "but that it always had, and I see no change. Ah! let me see closer; is it this?"

"This what?"

"It will scarcely stay to be noticed," I said, compelled to watch intently.

"It is beautifully done, is it not?" she asked with a grave smile.

"It is more than beautifully done, it is unaccountably done." The artist had done that which I had never seen elsewhere, placed a tiny coronet of thorns upon the baby brow of our Lord, but had, with exceeding skill, just tinged the top or other part of each thorn with gold, so as to give the effect of suppressed light ready to burst forth, and as you gazed long you almost saw, or thought you saw, a moving cloud or wandering streak of dainty brilliance hovering from thorn to thorn. Whether such strange effect was wrought by skill of artist cunningly arranging colour, or by fancy, most artistic of artists, I could not tell.

"Your statue surprises with new beauties whenever I see it. It should have more effect than ever now. It tells of joy bringing sorrow, of sorrow turning into glory."

"Of Holy Saturday bringing in Easter morn," she added.

"But what," I asked "induced you to make the change?"

"Oh! it was not I: I have but copied the original again. It was because of an Easter gift the Madonna gave us."

"Tell it to me, if I am worthy."

"Ah! what I always doubt. You English are such sad infidels. If I tell you the story, you'll be searching for hidden wires inside the statue, looking about for electric contrivances, or sending for an expert analyst to analyse the paint."

"Oh, we English people are getting better," I laughed: "when the whole country from Canterbury and York downwards is talking of reunion with Rome and that too while neither yields or gives up anything, don't say we're not ready to believe any marvel, nay! any impossibility."

She shook her head gaily. "Well then I will trust you," she said; "but I warn you, this is no mediæval tale which

you may easily believe because it was so long ago—what a strange infidel trick that is of yours, to believe that the dead bones of a saint raised a chance corpse to life long ago, but to scoff at the removal of a headache by the touch of a relic, if it be done to-day. God with you is dead to-day. But to begin my tale, the last scene in which befell only an Easter or two since, and which after all has nothing of the startlingly miraculous. You have never heard me speak of a favourite younger sister of mine perhaps have you ?"

"I do not think you have spoken of any but your sister Teresa who made such a strangely rapid recovery some Easters ago."

"Ah! no," she laughed; "a wholly different being, the pet of the family; and indeed looking back, as I do now, through years of sorrow, I can hardly blame the family. An angel of strength could scarcely have resisted Margarita's smile; a saint would have been perplexed by Margarita's ways: the smile was not of earth, the joyous ways were as the ways of the Holy Innocents whom the Church pictures as playing indeed, but upon holy ground, beneath the very Altar on which they should be the first victims, and with the serious devotional toys of the Martyrs' crown and palms. She was a mixture of heavenly gravity with abounding mirth."

"Something like," I broke in, "your artist's mingling of golden light with the thorny crown of sorrow."

"Thank you," she said: "that is just the meaning of my tale. Well! whether with fault or not on our part, she grew up, our little 'Rita,' our sweet pearl of price, to be the joy, the light, the music of the home, and best of all not knowing that she was so: thinking herself, or so it seemed, the least of all, least not in age and stature only, least in talent, least in gifts, least in knowledge, least in grace and least deserving

of all those streams of love which others, she knew not why, from every side poured upon her. So it would seem impossible to spoil her. Ay de mi! How did we manage it? But I am going too fast—not yet, not yet.

Soon after one Christmas, when she was about twelve years old, a Christmas in which she had been more than ever the life and radiance of our Christmas merriment, the happiness of our Christmas devotions and deeds of mercy, we found our little 'Rita' on one of the terraces perfectly unconscious, with all the light gone out of her fixed eyes and all the glow of health from her cheeks. It was the beginning of a long illness, and the house of joy was on the instant a house of mourning, a house of penitential prayer. Graver and graver became the look of the kind physician, who himself or an assistant scarcely left the bedside; more silent was he and more sad. 'Your hope is in prayer,' he said, 'I see no other.' And I think we prayed indeed. Our hearts told us that we deserved it; we had used her graces, her simplicity, for ourselves, for our own enjoyment, and the idol whom we had set up was to be taken from us."

"You did not forget your Lady of help, of consolation?"

"Of course not, how can you ask? Floods of tears were wept before our Lady of pity, and the tenderness of her look of pity seemed to us to deepen, as Lent came and lingered on and she did not recover, the disease did not relax, but yet she did not die. 'Will she recover, Doctor?' we cried: 'Impossible,' he answered; 'if the disease do not kill, she will die more cruelly of weakness.' But it was Holy Week, and we reminded our Lady of the Tomb of hopeless sorrow, and of the Easter tomb of royal glory, and at the midnight of Easter eve our pearl was given back to us, not indeed in full strength and life so that it was clear miracle, but beyond the hopes of all, contrary to the certain expectation of the nurses and physicians."

She rose and arranged the flowers before Mary, kissing her feet with a devotion which well-nigh brought tears to my eyes.

"Is that all?" I ventured at last to ask.

"No, nor half, nor the worst: sorrow and joy, gladness and grief, heavy clouds with broad paths of light; it was not for this that we gave the gold-tipped crown of thorns. Rita recovered; slowly but steadily; if she had been lovely before, now far lovelier; if merry before, now her maturer wit sparkled and shone with a gaiety that was all her own. She was sought after. No party complete without her; as years went on a free entry for her to every mansion in the peninsula; invited to Court; the beautiful Lady Margarita was in everybody's mouth."

"I think I can anticipate part of your story," I said, seeing that the telling of it tried her much, and that the tears were flowing silently but freely. "She lost that charm of the pearl—how could she keep it in such scenes—the exquisite simplicity of unworldliness which transfigures the innocent: she——"

"She fell, or would have fallen, into a deeper misery. At the Court she met with a Lord from your country, rich, witty, well-read, brave, courtesy itself and kindness,—to give him the honour he deserved—attractive with all the natural gifts of which your countrymen can boast, but lacking the one great gift, without which all others are worse than nothing."

"The gift of faith," I said, "the knowledge of the truth of God."

"And so the perfection of the natural made war against all that was more than nature; and the natural, for it was there to be heard and seen, was the stronger in the battle. Before she fell ill, and still more in the dreary time of her illness, she talked of giving her young life and its beauty to her God.

She knew many convents and many Orders, for we have relatives, I think, in half the Convents in Spain, and she would picture herself one while with aunt Ursula, and again with cousin Benita, or her devoted friend Carlota, but always in the church or in the cell. Now her talk was of balls and banquetings, bull-fights and theatres and singers : her heart, that had been guarded for God, was open to the inrush of the world."

"She gave up the thought of being a nun ?"

"I will not say she gave it up. It passed from her. But look ! you have your answer there." She pointed to the statue, and whether it was that my eyes were not wholly free from tears, or whether, as I said before, it was some strange commingling of colours from which came the effect, there seemed to be a moving of golden light about and within the dark crown of thorns.

"I understand : there was joy amidst the sorrow."

"We did not fully know the sorrow till with the knowledge came the joy. She had written to us from the Court to say that she would like to spend Holy Week and Easter at home—the Queen would dispense with her services for that time. We did not know that she had made arrangements that it should be her last Easter at home : that despairing of getting her parents' consent to union with a lover who would not add to his natural gifts the endowment of the faith, she had agreed with him upon a plan to leave Spain for England and there begin a life of union, right indeed in the eyes of men but unblessed by the Church. It would make less noise if the plan were carried out far from the gay capital, but as near as our castle stood to the sea."

"You were spared the anxious fear which would have come of knowledge."

"But we had not the comfort of prayer : we could not approach our Lady of Pity in a danger of which we did not dream ; to avert an act which none of our race could by

possibility have done, certainly none so good, for the glamour of her innocence and goodness had not yet passed away. This trace of past goodness at least was left, that she could not, would not, go during Easter week. Low Monday was the appointed day. Other graces have come as answer to special prayers. This, except that much love is the best and most constant of prayers, was granted without a single cry put up. Our Easter dinner party had been as one of the days of old: our pearl was with us, not sparkling with the flashes of wit and humour which she had shot forth at court, but shining with the modest quiet and happiness which we had loved so well: we had found our own again in every way. When we had retired for the night I stole down to visit our dear Lady of Spain."

"Lady of Pity, Lady of the fallen," I said, "our Lady of the faith."

"Heap on our Mother all the endearing titles you can: it will be one, I think, of our delights in Heaven: yes, truly, Lady of the fallen; for I thought the day had gone without the accustomed gift, the usual Easter greeting from our Queen: but when I came to the little chapel in which we kept her throned, at her feet lay our Rita prostrate and in an agony of tears. I had come silently, and wonder stayed my steps and voice together now. Unconscious of my presence she knelt up upon her knees, and with clasped hands, 'Let me not leave you, Mother,' she cried; 'this is your day, your Easter; save your sick child.' The look of pity deepened, grew more pitiful, if possible, on our Mother's face. My poor sister turned and flung herself into my arms. 'I have been very wicked,' she sobbed; then I knew that Our Lady had come with her Easter gift.

"Why make a long tale longer than it need be. We took her to our good mother then lying on the bed of her last sickness, and to her the poor strayed daughter, so nearly

fallen even from the faith, told the whole story of her wanderings, and sought to be sent away to the sternest safest Order, the most hidden, the most inaccessible convent, in Spain. And the dying mother gladly let her go on the morrow, writing on her behalf meanwhile to the English Lord, 'The Spaniard and the Catholic cannot take from the Altar and give God's portion to man.'

"From the Carmelite convent to which she had been taken we heard from time to time, always from the first good news, how she had never looked back, that now she had put on the habit, that her good Abbess had been compelled to moderate her penances which threatened to cast her into an illness; that as a mortification, under obedience, she would soon be writing home, that with floods of tears and with a devotion that moved all the Sisters she at last on S. Teresa's day had made her vows, safe from herself and from the world, as she hoped. And all this from that lasting Easter Sunday when she rose from the tomb of her vanity."

"Then it is for this that you devised that cloudy halo of unearthly mystic light which forms so singular a coronet round the Holy Child's brow?"

"Not quite," she answered with a smile, "it was for the perfecting of the gift in Easter last year, which was partly the cause of our absence from this strange perplexing England, the state of which is not much unlike the coronet of mingled light and cloud. You have not been much in Spain?"

"Not much."

"You do not know the beauty of her mountain paths, of the many chances she gives of being alone, alone with the most lovely and wild and romantic of landscape, filling the eyes with scenes and the mind with thoughts, which make you in the midst of loneliness not alone; if there were not

far higher motives for love, her children might well love her for herself. But I am transgressing. Near the summit of one of the highest among these mountain paths, far away from and above the world, in a Carmelite convent during the Lent of last year the Lady Abbess lay dying. So far as years went she had not lived her life, but the grace which had outstripped her years—for all called her Saint—had made her worthy of death. Her children stood around her, and she had but one longing, which she hoped to have satisfied before she died. It was that she might see once more, that she might see and thank Our Lady of the Captive, Our Lady of Spain, Our Lady of Pity, Our Lady of the fallen. You will have guessed that this was our dear image, and that the dying Mother Magdalen was none other than our sister Margarita, our pearl of great price. Not even to comfort her would they part with the original, so long lost, so strangely recovered, from home: so as part consolation we took our copy and wound up the long mountain path, and before she died on the Easter night, she had wept her last tears of penitence, and her last tears of thankful joy, upon the feet of her who snatched her from peril, who remembered, though she forgot, the prayers and promises of innocent childhood.

. . . . .

On that same Easter day on which the pure self-punishing, self-condemning soul fled away, in the old chapel of a ducal mansion, restored now at last to Catholic worship, the Peer, whose richly gifted nature had almost stolen away her faith, had made his first Communion. And then we said at last, 'The barren Easter Sunday has borne more fruit than the fruitful.' You will grant that we have reason for loving and for trusting our dear Lady of Help."

THE ORPHANAGE OF THE THIRTY-FOUR.

"YOU ask me sir, why the number is thirty-four. You are not the first who has asked the question."

"Yes!" I replied, "I could understand thirty-three, out of devotion to Our Lord's life; but why thirty-four?"

"Well!" said the old man, who had been showing me over Castle and Orphanage, "I will tell you the Legend: but whether it is the truth or simply invented to account for the number, I know not."

And taking an old scroll, penned to all appearance more than a century ago, from a chest, he gave me a short account of its contents.

. . . . .

HE had been singing his first Mass; and his first Mass was the midnight Mass of Christmas. He had been singing it in the old old church, which, built hundreds of years ago in the days of danger, while the Moors were yet part-sovereigns of Spain, had nestled close up to his Castle walls for safety's sake. His Castle; a castle which had come down to him through a long line of warriors, men in whom he might well glory; who had fought for the Faith, who had suffered for it in the hands of the Infidels, who had died for it as martyrs. On the Castle walls—aye! on the hills for many a mile around—were the signs of their glorious deeds. It was at that loop-hole in the southern tower that the Countess stood watching for her lord coming up over the hills to raise the siege and bring food to the starving soldiers and starving family; watching because her youngest boy was pining away from famine, and she dreaded lest for his sake she must surrender; when the last arrow from the Moors, before they retreated, shot her to the heart, and the Count rode in triumphant to find her dead.

There in yonder angle of the wall was the tiny opening through which, in another siege, a child-soldier of the heroic house, a mere boy, had stolen out to arrange the coming up of aid from the King; just seen from the loop-hole of the western gate-tower was the field of the terrible slaughter, when the garrison sallied forth in the night, and the Infidels were hemmed in between two forces. If the castle was dear to him because it was part of his country's history, the history of a country that had kept its Faith by blood, dearer still was the church; for there were the ashes of the men themselves, and the tombs in which they lay, and on which in each chapel and each niche were sculptured Count and Countess and kneeling children, their hands clasped in prayer, and their marble lips speaking to him of the Faith, the courage, the boundless generosity, of which he was heir.

A race of warriors, as much made for war—those holier wars for the Faith in which death on the battlefield came near to Martyrdom—as the stern old Castle which frowned from its mountain height; and he the first Count-Priest that the long line had ever given to the Church.

He had sung his first Mass: the midnight Christmas Mass: and the bells of the old church tower rang out merrily on the still midnight air, as he, unable to rest from joy, paced to and fro on the terrace before the Castle, in the shadow of the towers, while all the scene around—his scene—his church—his little hamlet scattered over the mountain paths—lay in a Christmas peace beneath the moonlight. His first Mass in the old church; he would rather have sung it there, with the poor help of the village choir, than with the artistic music and the grandest ceremonial of the Cathedral of Seville. All the past glory of his race—all the heroic deeds of centuries, were there gathered up, as at one gift, in the first Mass of the last Count, and offered anew to God. His Mass over, he had finished his thanksgiving in the little

stable-like Chapel where the story of the first Christmas Day was rudely told in the images of the smiling Baby, and the worshipping Mother and the Foster-Father, and the mute, adoring, half-conscious wonder of the Ox and Ass.

And now he paced to and fro in happy thought—a continuance of his thanksgiving—waiting for the time of his second Mass.

His heart was no less generous than the hearts of his ancestors; he had given up all—or meant to give it up—to God. Even the last, most difficult sacrifice had been made, the sacrifice by which he knowingly ended the long line of his race. He knew that the race ended with him, and that the Castle and wide lands would pass, when he died, into other, though not unworthy hands. But times had changed; neither Faith nor country could be helped any longer by stern tower and fierce victory, and he thought it no dishonour, but rather the crown of glorious centuries, the grandest glory of them all, to change sword for chalice, and the tumult of battle for the peaceful music of the Mass. He had laid all this just now, as a Christmas offering, at the Baby's feet.

There was one thing he lacked yet.

He had the fault of a country which was once Queen of two worlds, the fault especially of his country's nobles, the natural fault of the owner of wide lands, the heir of long glory; he was proud. He cherished high thoughts of self, and he spoke haughty words—offspring of high thoughts—to others. He saw himself born to high position—placed on a throne, as it were, above most men; and he could not stoop or did not love the stooping. Even now, strangely mingled with his generous self-offering, and his delight in his Priesthood, were dreams, when his thoughts wandered, of high station, befitting his nobility, in the Church; of a sway, wider than his wide lands, over the minds and souls

of men; pictures of church pomp, not all displeasing, in which he was the central figure.

He loved the simple folk of the village round, yet with the love of one who seemed in himself something higher than they: haughty and reserved, they knew him to be good, yet the poor shrank from drawing near him, and no child gave him back smile for smile. God stooped from Heaven to His creature; but the noble could not stoop to his fellow man.

I tell but a legend: I make no pretence that it is true; but this is what—as the villagers handed it down, mother to child, in after years—befell the Count Priest as he paced to and fro in the silent midnight after his first Christmas Mass.

"Help me, Father! I am poor and hungry and naked."

The Count started: for there by his side, holding the fringe of the band that went round his cassock, was the boy who had spoken. Very poor indeed he looked; ill-clad and shivering in the raw midnight air; and his face, though comely in feature and beautiful, showed ghastly pale in the dark shadows of the towers.

"How came you here?" was the impatient question of the Priest, "these grounds are private; what right have you here?" but he felt the child's eyes upon him, and his angry words were checked.

"Where should the poor go but to the Priest? where should the child go but to the Father? in the name of the Child before whom you just now knelt, and gave to Him your whole self, and of whom I am the likeness, help me; Priest of the Babe of Bethlehem, help!"

"Of Whom you are the likeness! It is so indeed," muttered the Count, as he gazed more carefully on the features of the Child—"strange likeness! but tell me, fair child, how know you what I said in my heart just now at the feet of the Child?"

"How know I! what else could a Priest say, to whom

Christ has just given up His whole Self in his first Mass ?"

"You are a strange child ; how can you venture, you who are so poor, to speak thus to a noble ?"

"None is nobler," answered the boy, "than the likeness of Christ. A nobler than yourself was poor like me ; ill-clad like me : hungry like me. The noblest was not born in a castle, but in a manger."

"Strangely like," murmured the Priest, as the eyes of the child seemed to look into his soul. "Child," he said, "whoever thou art ; what help dost thou ask of me ?"

"Food at thy table ; clothing from thy wardrobe ; shelter beneath thy roof ; for the love of the Child Who loved thee, grant me this boon."

"That would be to make thee my son ! thee ! a beggar !"

"God," was the answer, "made man His Son—him—a beggar."

"Have you no home ?"

"Ah me !" sighed the child. "I knock from door to door, as Mary went from house to house in Bethlehem long ago, but there is none to open."

"For the love of the Babe of Bethlehem I will open," said the Priest. "Come in, fair child, and rest ; come in, and I will give thee food and warmth."

But as he turned to enter, there shone suddenly round him a brighter light within the shadow of the towers than shone beyond it ; and the boy, no more ill clad, no longer worn and pale, but bright and glorious, was lifted in the air above him, and he knew him now, not the image of Christ, but Christ Himself showing himself as still a Child.

"Lord," said the Priest, as he fell upon his face, "what will you have me to do ?"

And as the vision faded, the answer sounded—was it in his heart only or in his ears also ? "As long as you do it to one of these my least brethren, you do it to Me."

Those who attended the second Mass at daybreak noticed that he shed abundance of tears, and seemed full of devotion. But the whole village, and indeed the country round, noted that the Count Priest was changed. The Count was lost in the Priest, and the Priest was humble with a great humility. If there seemed to be reserve now, those who knew him best saw that it was the reserve of one who counted himself least and lowest of all, unworthy to mingle with his kind.

The once haughty Spanish noble took his delight now to be with the poor, and chiefly with the children. Before Christmas-tide was over, the gossips of the village—for the castle and the doings of its inmates were the great matter of interest to their humble lives—had another subject for their talk. The Count, it was said, was no more content to live alone: but had taken into the Castle a little child, an orphan, poor and homeless, whom he was tending with affectionate care, and treating, so said the gossippers, like a little Prince; and the old women shook their heads and wondered what the grand old Counts of by-gone days would have said to it all.

But the Count held on his way, and still, as each Christmas came, there came with it another orphan child to join the rest; and when the three Masses were over, it was the delight of the Count to make for his little charges a Christmas Feast and to wait upon them himself. And as time went on and the number grew, a simple dwelling close to the old church was built for his orphans, and the Count joined others to himself in their care. And so the number grew; some passing off to their calling in life but others taking their place, and one more being added each Christmas until the Count waited on thirty-two orphans at their Christmas Feast.

Nor was it only to the care of these orphans that the Count Priest confined his labours. The children from many a mile around came in, as often as they could, when snow was not too deep, or rains too fierce, upon the mountain

paths, to win teaching from his lips for this world and the next. And many a day he himself, in the simplest dress of a poor Priest, might be seen toiling with his mountain staff to the far-off hut of some woodman or hunter, to comfort the sick or teach the child.

He was getting now, if not old, yet well advanced in years and feeble through much labour. The thirty-third Christmas had come since the day on which he had sung his first Mass and the Count went in to wait on his thirty-three little friends, and to see the new orphan boy. But how is this? "Pedro," said the Count, turning to one of his helpers, "you have in your charity, gone beyond my orders. I bade you seek out one orphan, and you have brought me two. Was it some unusual case of distress? or why have you done so?"

"No, Father," answered Pedro. "I kept strictly to your commands. I brought but one."

"Whence then the thirty-fourth?"

But the child smiled upon him, and the Count knew—knew that it was the same Child whom he had seen on the night of his first Mass beneath the shadow of the towers.

"You have taken me into your house," said the Child. "I will take you into mine. You have waited upon me at your table. I will wait upon you at mine."

And the Count saw the merciful warning of the words, and made ready for his death, which fell upon the Feast of the Epiphany. He left money to support his orphanage, and ordered that for ever the number of the children should be thirty-four: and that if other orphanages could be founded out of the funds still the number within them should be thirty-four.

"And that you see, sir," said the old man, putting back the manuscript into the chest, "is the reason why in this house they always keep to this number—thirty-four, neither more nor less."

Deacon Douglas;

OR, TALKS WITH NONCONFORMISTS.

TALK I.

THE DAWNING OF THE MORNING.

Fr. O'Flanagan. Most glad to see you, sir. My good son, Mr. Pollitt, wrote to me about your coming. He has told me of all your kindness to him when he was serving in India, and it will be a pleasure to serve you.

Douglas. Poor Pollitt! he was a fine fellow. I made his acquaintance in hospital, when we were both down for days with dysentery; and when we got intimate, we fell to talking of religion. Many a stout battle have we fought about it—he a stout Ritualist (as the word is now) of the Church of England, talking of Confession and Mass and the Priesthood, of Father this or that; and I not holding with Priesthood at all from gown to Chalice, and laughing at the idea of a fellow-man offering anything in the way of sacrifice, or being set apart for such work.

Fr. O'Flanagan. Well! did you do each other any good?

Douglas. Well! yes: each got stronger in his own views, if that was any good, and we grew firm friends, and that certainly was a good. But lately—and this you will think a good, I am sure—I don't know how it is, words that he said long years ago let me see,

fourteen or fifteen years ago—keep coming back to me, and somehow get clearer; so I wrote and told him so; and that's why I'm here to-night.

Fr. O'Flanagan. You are a Nonconformist, you told me: may I ask, of what kind?

Douglas. Independent, or Congregationalist, a Deacon of the Chapel in Cromwell Street, of which the Rev. Mr. Akenshaw is Pastor.

Fr. O'Flanagan. Ah! yes, a fine preacher, they tell me, and a kind, good man.

Douglas. I am glad to hear you speak so well of him. I thought, if I may venture to say so, you might not like us poor Nonconformists so well as your grand Ritualists, with their Copes and Chaunts and Incense and fandangles.

Fr. O'Flanagan. Ah, well! I fancy I see signs that some of you Nonconformists are turning "high": we shall have high Congregationalists and low Congregationalists soon. You shake your head, but for all that the signs are real. Your Chapels have become Churches, and are positively in decent architecture, some of them.

Douglas. I confess I do like architecture.

Fr. O'Flanagan. You are getting notions of worship as a distinct thing from preaching, perhaps a higher thing: your music is decidedly going up: your idea of liberal support of your Ministers is on the advance, and you are even now waging a hot controversy on the "Liturgy Question," some of you wanting a regular Prayer Book like the Church of England.

Douglas. And for all this you would think better of us?

Fr. O'Flanagan. Well! it is something to touch but the hem of the King's Garment, to begin to love the least thing that the Catholic Spirit loves. But all this is nothing but the fringe. And as for caring more for the Ritualists because of their Ritualism than for you—believe me, No. Of the two, Anglicanism and Nonconformity, I—but I don't pledge myself that my fellow-priests will say the same—infinitely prefer Nonconformity, and that, too, simply for its Non conformity, because I think that almost all have broken away from the Church of England in search, though you knew it not, of some fragment of Catholicity of which you had been robbed. Notably is that so with those of you, who protest against the power of State having anything to do with matters of doctrine, and, I believe, you all think alike on that matter, and against a Church being imposed on an unwilling nation by taxes and police.

Douglas. Why, Father, you are quite hot over us.

Fr. O'Flanagan. I am hot over you. A revolted Church complains of revolt: a separated Church refuses the right of separation: a Church which sold Truth for safety and for gold would have you treat it as if it were no traitor: a Church——but forgive me, this will not do.

Douglas. There are good men in the Church of England.

Fr. O'Flanagan. Good men, warm-hearted, generous, religious men, the finest fellows every way, but their cause is hollow. No, Mr. Douglas; do not dream that we of the one Old Church could possibly despise you or treat you as on a lower level than the Church of England. Speak out to me your difficulties: I will pay them every respect, and as far as possible enter into and explain them.

Douglas. Well, then, Father, many of your doctrines Pollitt showed me in a light which made them look much more reasonable and more Scriptural than they had ever seemed before, though of course I could not quite give in to them; and, indeed, I will say this, your doctrines do hang together in a wonderful way they are all one somehow: give in to one and you've got to give in to the lot. But I can't make up my mind to a thing which seems at the bottom of all the rest——

Fr. O'Flanagan. And that is?——

Douglas. Priest-ism, or, to be Latin, Sacerdotalism, a separate Order, a separate caste of men, set apart from others; and not only apart, but set above others, with separate powers—and great powers, too—which the rest of us have not.

Fr. O'Flanagan. Ah! Mr. Douglas, Mr. Douglas! this is indeed a task before us. You have said, and said rightly, that all doctrines are one, a seamless robe woven from the top throughout. One error sets the whole in confusion, and we shall have much to talk about, many principles to look into, before you can see aright. I take it that the chief evil you see in Priestism, as you call it, is ——

Douglas. That it dishonours Our Lord, takes the work that He alone can do out of His Hands. Do you not think so?

Fr. O'Flanagan. The very opposite, Mr. Douglas. If indeed it dishonoured Our Lord, it could be no doctrine of the Catholic Church, whose Life, whose Breath, is the Honour of Christ. In fact, as I am sure Pollitt will have told you, it increases wonderfully and in many ways that Honour. How, I will try and show you when you come again.

TALK II.

Scattering the Morning Mists.

Fr. O'Flanagan. Ah! Mr. Douglas, I've had you in my mind ever since you were here. It's hard enough for our bodies to meet, we've both of us so much to do, but it's harder still for our minds to meet, for you to understand me, and me to understand you.

Douglas. Why? Pollitt used to say you were so easy to understand, and that you knew what Jones and all the others meant before they had time to say it.

Fr. O'Flanagan. Yes; Jones was a simple Protestant. You and your fellows don't be angry with me, you'll see I mean no harm are double Protestants. "Church of Englanders" protest against Rome; in dealing with them we have a plain simple task of clearing away falsehoods which they have been brought up to think truth, correcting mistakes about what we teach, or how far we teach it, showing how the Bible, and how the early Christians, and how sound Reason support our Doctrines and so on. But you protest against Rome and all her chief teachings—Sacrifice, Priest, and Sacraments—as much as any of them; but protest also—I think protest more and with a stronger hatred—against the "Church of England."

Douglas. How does that make it harder for you to deal with us?

Fr. O'Flanagan. Because you see Rome through glasses coloured with hatred of England; and you mix us up together and hold Rome to be the same sort of thing as the Church of England, instead of being as far apart from it as the North Pole from the South.

Douglas. Far apart as North from South?

Fr. O'Flanagan Certainly; by-and-bye you'll see this. So that you don't give us credit for condemning many of the Church of England practices, and ways, and habits, as strongly if not more strongly than you do yourselves; nor for having reformed by a real reformation in ourselves at the Council of Trent some old-time ways—which the "Reformed Church of England" has not put right to this day.

Douglas. You admit, then, that you wanted Reform?

Fr. O'Flanagan. In some things and by some people Reform was needed, as it was needed by the early Christians to whom St. Paul writes at Corinth and elsewhere; as it was needed by some of the Seven Churches in Asia to whom St. John writes—and what needed reform was reformed and is reformed; but into this we will go at

another time. Just now I only want you to understand that Rome is not to be seen with the same eyes with which you look at England. It is of a wholly different spirit, and stands in a wholly different position towards you and the whole world, from the spirit and the attitude of the "Church of England."

Douglas. Give me instances that I may be clear as to what you mean.

Fr. O'Flanagan. We shall see them as we go on. Now we will only take one. You think the "Church of England" to be a slave of the State; it is one of your chief objections against her.

Douglas. Certainly; created and preserved by the State, and therefore looking to her Creator and Preserver in all things.

Fr. O'Flanagan. You also look upon her, notwithstanding, as one of the "Churches," one of the Heaven-appointed Sections, into which God is pleased, in your view, that His Religion should be divided.

Douglas. Yes; our Pastor, talking the other day of Christian Re-union, said: "I can understand Communion with all Christians, except Unitarians who deny Our Lord's Divinity, and Roman Catholics who set up the Papal Supremacy."

Fr. O'Flanagan. I see; we are Pope-worshippers, not Christ-worshippers, but you at all events—the Congregationalists and Nonconformists in general– are members of Christ, and the "Church of England," though a State-worshipper, is a member of Christ too; State-worshipping is not sufficient sin to unchurch her; that you hold, certainly?

Douglas. Yes: I suppose so.

Fr. O'Flanagan. Moreover, as a State Creation, it somewhat persecuted you, did it not—forbade you to hold public office, put you in prison, fined you, made laws against you, drove you to foreign lands, even put some of you to death, and has ever since given you a sort of social persecution, shutting schools and universities to you, standing aloof from you and treating you generally as a sort of inferior Englishmen.

Douglas. Well! yes: but we are living it down.

Fr. O'Flanagan. Yes: you are living it down, or rather the gradual prevailing of better ideas, sounder religious views, and—pardon me the greater presence among you of us poor despised lovers of Rome, has shown men the folly and the injustice of so playing the Pharisee towards you. But meanwhile all this wrong-doing has created in you a bitter feeling, which it would be hard to distinguish from hatred, towards the "Church of England" and towards any body of Christians claiming to be itself the whole Church

of God to which all men who would be thorough Christians must belong. The "Church of England," at least a large party in it, claims to be the only Church of God in England: we claim to be the only Church of God in England and everywhere else: you have mixed us together and passed on your bitter feeling, in some measure at least, to us.

Douglas. There may be something of truth in what you say.

Fr. O'Flanagan. Yet from us you have had nothing to suffer. The only chance we have had to show our spirit was in the three years or so of James II., and he had scarcely time to get seated on his throne before the jail doors were flung wide for all who were in prison—there were of Quakers alone twelve hundred—for conscience sake only. The Quakers went to thank him. "Some of you know," said the King; "I am sure you do, Mr. Penn," —I am reading from an authority among you, Skeat's *History of the Free Churches of England* —"that it was always my principle that conscience ought not to be forced, that all men ought to have liberty of their consciences." The King tells Mr. Penn that *he* ought to know because Penn's father had made James, before he was King, a sort of guardian to his son, and received a promise from the Prince, that he would do all in his power to shield the young man from any unpleasant results that might come of his Quakerism. This, however, by the way: we cannot now enter into the question of toleration, that is a big one and will do another time: now it is enough that, as a matter of fact, you English Nonconformists have no case against us Catholics as having hurt a hair of your head: rather you have persecuted us than we you.

Douglas. We persecute you?

Fr. O'Flanagan. "None of them," says Skeats, speaking of Independents, Baptists, and Quakers specially, "not even Penn, was in favour of the toleration of Roman Catholicism."

Douglas. Because you are more intolerant than any—the very teachers of intolerance. England learned her persecution from you.

Fr. O'Flanagan. You will come to understand us better some day. The Church of Rome is not intolerant, nor has been. Crime she would have the State punish and repress: conscience, real conscience, she would never have the State punish, nor punish herself, however mistaken the conscience or the mind might be.

But there are many differences between Rome and the Church of England, and the ways in which each presents itself before you.

England claims to be the dominant some say the only true Religion in England because she is supported by the State, by law

established. If you dissent from her, you condemn yourself, not so much by falling off from the truth of Christ as by breaking the law of the country.

Douglas. Are you against Disestablishment altogether?

Fr. O'Flanagan. These questions are too wide to go into properly; I can only touch them lightly. I do not say that Establishment can not be right, but I say that such an Establishment as that of the Church of England can never be right.

Douglas. Because the nation is not all of the same faith, and therefore does not as a nation agree to the Establishment.

Fr. O'Flanagan. True; some are favoured and some are oppressed. But not only this, it is an Establishment in which the State is the superior party in the Union, even in matters of religion—the world rules in the things of God. Such an Establishment, even were we all religiously one, would in principle be wrong, distinctly sinful. As a writer among yourselves says well, "The Establishment * is of the earth, earthly; a political institution; a creature of the State. Its supreme governor is the monarch; its faith and ritual are prescribed by Parliament; its bishops are appointed by the Prime Minister; its livings are distributed by patronage, or sold and bought as merchandise; nor can its doctrines, services, and ceremonies be corrected or modified except by Parliament. Therefore it is a thing of this world."

I do not see how it is possible to look upon such a worldling, when it robes itself as a minister of Christ, with anything but contempt. I am abstracting altogether from those who compose the "Church of England," its ministers, and its laity—for many I have the sincerest respect—but the idea of a body which claims to be looked upon as from God obeying and serving the powers of this world in an inconsistent idea a mockery. "I am not of this world," says Our Lord. How differently does the Church of Rome present itself before you! "I come to you," is its language, "in the name of Christ alone: the powers I have I received from Him: I exist for His glory: the truth that I preach to you I received from Him; and from Him my worship, the form of my government, my priesthood, my sacraments: it is not I who live, but Christ who lives in me: by the freedom with which He has made me free, I am wholly independent of any power in this world, in the matters of my faith, my worship and my internal government; nay! in such matters I am above all other powers: I am the Kingdom of Heaven, above, there-

* Johnson's *Why am I a Free Churchman.*

fore, all the kingdoms on earth, and my Head who rules through me, is King of Kings. I am eternal with His Eternity, for I change not: truthful with His truth, one with His oneness, merciful with His mercy, for I am His bride, and He and I are one."

You may think such an one claims largely, you will require, and rightly, strong proof of the goodness of the claim: but can you despise such an one with the contempt due to the falseness of a State creation, receiving from the State the things which are of the State, and pretending the while to have come forth from God?

Douglas. No: certainly; such a claim as yours, be it right or wrong, has a majesty about it, and a divine unworldliness, which, if it is only in the least borne out by proofs put upon it, would command respect.

Fr. O'Flanagan. Such is Rome's position. As Eve came forth from the side of the sleeping Adam, in the fulness of her life and the completeness of her beauty, which she had received from God through him, nothing imperfect in her reason or her will, armed with full knowledge, robed in the grace of God—so came forth from the side of Christ sleeping on the Cross, the Church, Christ's Church, His Bride, in fulness of knowledge, of beauty, of form, with a perfection of life given to her by that Divine Bleeding Adam, a life which did not change to death like Eve's, but which enjoys perpetual youth, and has not upon it after the toil the suffering, the battles of nigh two thousand years, so much as a single stain.

To this claim you have to show your equality: to the children of men, the other sects about you, the usurping "Church of England" herself, it is easy to show equality, superiority if you will; but you are dealing now with one who accepts no power, no wealth, from earthly hands, and who is still hated by the world, still slandered by the world, "as dying and behold she lives."

Douglas. You mean, Father, that I shall have to show as good reason for Congregationalism being the Truth of God, as Rome can show for her world-wide and time-long Church (so she boasts) being the Truth of God.

Fr. O'Flanagan. Exactly: you hold that you do preach to the world the Truth of God?

Douglas. Certainly.

Fr. O'Flanagan. Then next time we will begin and enter into matters more deeply. I told you it would be a long business. There are all sorts of things we must search into. Good night!

TALK III.

A Plunge into the Deep.

Fr. O'Flanagan. A grand night you've brought with you, Mr. Douglas, to make you doubly welcome. It's a shame to go to bed with such a moon. You don't see your moon every day, and there's no twenty-four hours that you see her exactly the same; that's what makes her so interesting, always fresh. But there; like an old man talking nonsense about the moon when we ought to be thinking of far higher matters. In medias res, Mr. Douglas, into the depths of our subject. Don't be startled at my first question. You believe Our Lord to be a wise man?

Douglas. That is indeed a startling question. He is Wisdom itself.

Fr. O'Flanagan. Yes: He is Wisdom itself, for He is God: but fixing our eyes on His Human Nature, looking upon Him as our fellow-man, He has the most perfect Intelligence, the completest Knowledge, the utmost Prudence, the utmost Skill to adapt means to ends, and to accomplish the ends He designs which it is possible for a created Nature to have.

Douglas. Of course: all this follows from His being God.

Fr. O'Flanagan. True: you hold also that Our Lord was a good man; I should say rather is than was, but I am thinking of Him during His earthly sojourn.

Douglas. Oh! Father! am I a Christian?

Fr. O'Flanagan. Bear with me, Mr. Douglas. And the Heart of that Goodness, that which makes His Goodness to be what it is, is His Love of His Father. It is His Father's Will that He does; it is His Father's Honour that He seeks. "I honour My Father." They are His Father's words that He speaks: "For I have not spoken of Myself; but the Father which sent Me He gave me a Commandment what I should say and what I should speak: and whatsoever I speak even as the Father said to Me so I speak." I should have to quote many and long passages if you called upon me to prove the Love that the Son bears to the Father, and therefore bears also to us.

Douglas. There is no need: we all know it: "I have glorified Thee on the earth: I have finished the work which Thou gavest Me to do."

Fr. O'Flanagan. Very well then, Mr. Douglas. We both agree that Honour of His Father was very dear to the Heart of Our Lord.

Douglas. Dearer than Life: did He not die for His Father's Honour?

Fr. O'Flanagan. And part of that Honour is, that the world should know Him, should love Him, and should worship Him. He was to bring on the hour when "true worshippers should worship the Father in spirit and in truth."

Douglas. Why! Father, we agree in all points; so far, at all events, have I travelled side by side with a Priest.

Fr. O'Flanagan. But here, I fear, we must part company for a while. Tell me, Deacon Douglas, on the Nonconformist views, what provision did Our Lord, the Wisest and most Prudent of men, the most Loving of men, the most Powerful of men, make, before He left the earth, for the Honour of His Father by public worship?

Douglas. Our Lord encourages it by His promise to the "two or three" who shall be gathered together in His Name; by the institution of Our Lord's Supper.

Fr. O'Flanagan. True: but what one clear word have we in the New Testament, in any one of the Gospels, by which Our Lord gives instruction or directions or commandment to His Apostles, before or after His Resurrection, to worship that Father for Whom He died, in any public manner.

Douglas. Well! I have never looked into it very thoroughly; but it is strange; I cannot think of any passage just now.

Fr. O'Flanagan. You cannot think of one because there is none. And yet, remember, Our Lord is the responsible Head of the Human Race. To whom would it belong, if not to Him, to put in order that most important of all human duties towards God, that eternal duty, that duty of all Creation, for which Creation exists, the worship of the Great God. Nay! I will go further: if you don't understand me now, you will by-and-bye. As Head of the Human Race, as He Who notwithstanding is alone the Equal of the Father, alone sinless, alone, therefore, fit to offer worthy worship to the Great God, it is His to lead that worship of all men in Heaven and Earth, and underneath the Earth, now and for ever. With deeper meaning than he himself, I think, knew, sings the Poet:

> And so the whole round earth is every way
> Bound by gold chains about the Feet of God.

But He provides His Church or His Churches, as you would have me say with no syllable, nor least shadow, of public worship.

And the proof of absence of Our Lord's direction, is that—how long it is since Our Lord's Incarnation, since He made Himself responsible Minister of the whole Human Race?

Douglas. We shall shortly begin the Twentieth Century; nineteen hundred years will have passed.

Fr. O'Flanagan. And yet after nineteen hundred years you are discussing in your own serials and papers the "Question" of Congregational Worship, how much or how little of ritual may be introduced into "pure prayer." One writer says, "There can be no objection to the general repetition of the Lord's Prayer." Another tells of the irreverence—surely it is irreverence in the offering of public worship, though the simple man who offered the petition, may have been guiltless of the fault in the sight of God—which sometimes befalls these free prayers. The preacher was by profession a dentist, and not too wealthy. The "free" prayer-maker prays thus: "Lord, give Thy servant, who has been preaching, some teeth to pull out and some to put in, that he may be able to provide bread for his wife and little children, for I suppose he has some." It would have been more seemly, if such things are to be mentioned in public prayer, to have found out beforehand whether the little children existed or not. It scarcely seems to obey St. Paul's injunction, "Let all things be done decently and in order."

Douglas. Where did you see that?

Fr. O'Flanagan. In the *Independent and Nonconformist* of January 14, 1897, quoting it from the "Life of Richard Chew," as a story illustrative of the "rough Genius in Methodism." Think also, Mr. Douglas; you will remember that the worship of the Jews was the most magnificent on the face of the earth, that in the whole Roman Empire there was no Building like the Temple of Jerusalem; that to the grandeur of that worship the Jews thought it well worth the while to gather from all parts of the Empire, though travel was not then as now, once a year and oftener it might be; that the worship was God-appointed, every detail to the make of the Vestments, and the compounding of the Incense, and the nature and the slaying of the victims offered, ordered and written by God Himself; that it was supposed offence against the Temple and the Law of Moses which formed the leading accusation against Our Lord; that Our Lord Himself took part not unfrequently in this worship, and that He continually declared that this most costly, most divine, Heaven-descended Worship, He came not to destroy but to fulfil; that it was to be (I will use the modern word) developed, "evolved," into some-

thing greater, more glorious, than itself, though the most splendid worship of worships on the earth's face.

Douglas. O Father! yes: I remember all this; but what comes of it?

Fr. O'Flanagan. And do you remember also, that all the world over, however mean and wretched were the false religions that men held, yet that every worship of every God was celebrated with splendour and magnificence; that their temples are ruins of the noblest efforts of Architect and Artist and Designer, struggling to carry out the notion of Worship, of Reverence and Submission. And Our Lord wanted to teach all these?

Douglas. Most assuredly.

Fr. O'Flanagan. He wanted to show the Jews that He had fulfilled the Law, made it greater and higher in all points?

Douglas. Certainly.

Fr. O'Flanagan. And His poor weaklings of the Gentile world, the most rude material, would He—for He is the Wisest of men?

Douglas. Beyond all doubt.

Fr. O'Flanagan. The most Pitiful, Tenderest, and most Affectionate of men?

Douglas. Yes.

Fr. O'Flanagan. Would He shock and repel both Jews and Gentiles, by giving them no worship of His Father at all, or by giving them a Worship the entire opposite of that in which He Himself took part?

Douglas. Father, has He provided such a worship, left His Church or Churches fully equipped with all that was needful to draw down blessings upon itself, and to proclaim to men by worship as well as by preaching the truth of His Religion?

Fr. O'Flanagan. I do say so. He was the Wisest of men, most Kind and Thoughtful of men, most Powerful among men, knew beyond all men by what worship men would please His Father. He was the representative Man upon Whom I dare to say that the duty fell—and shall he not do it?—of providing in Heaven and on Earth, but if we may compare the two I would say chiefly on Earth, such worship as shall express in itself through the power of His Wisdom all that the human race should offer, all that in spirit and in truth it should feel towards the Father, and all that should at the same time sink deeply into human hearts, and make them to be what in itself it tended to make them; an eternal worship therefore, a continuance of His Own Worship of His Father, and that was infinitely perfect.

Well! now, good bye. I have given you something to think about, and you must pardon an old man if he feels fatigued and cannot go on, Irish as he is, with the same everlasting gallop. Next time you come I'll introduce you to my dear old friend, Jones.

TALK IV.

Wealth or Poverty?

Fr. O'Flanagan. Glad to see both of you; Deacon Douglas, you will soon be at home with my old friend, Jones. You must forgive me for hurrying at once into the thick of things. What I was saying to the Deacon last time, Jones—you were not here—was of this sort.

Our Lord came to do a work. He would do it, as never Man did work before, never will do again. What would He grudge to us Who spared not a drop of His Most Precious Blood? He is all Wise, therefore it will be full of Wisdom; all Powerful, therefore will it be full of divine Power; all Loving, therefore bubbling over with infinite Love.

And He wished men to believe in Him, and to know Him, for the Son of God?

Douglas. Surely.

Fr. O'Flanagan. And, therefore, will He let this Wisdom and Power and Love be seen and recognised by us. It shall be of human form and fashion, such as we can understand—really Divine at once and really Human, as He is Himself.

Jones. It would not help us if we could not see it to be Wisdom and Power and Love.

Fr. O'Flanagan. Then we went on to compare the Picture which Nonconformity paints of Our Blessed Lord with the Picture put before us by the Catholic Church. It needs no argument to prove that, if one Picture figures Him to us as full of Wisdom and forethought, of Love for God and Man, of Knowledge and Power used in the service of God and Man, the Picture which so paints Him is true; and if the other gives us a Portrait of Wisdom scarcely humanly wise, of Power not rising above Earth, of Love little prodigal of self, such Picture is not true. Error has no divine Poetry to paint God's Face more beautiful than It is.

Jones. And at what part of the picture, or comparison of pictures, are you now?

Fr. O'Flanagan. At Worship: at Our Lord as Founder of Worship. Our Lord loved His Father so truly, that we may reverently suppose—aye! feel sure—He would have established upon His Earth—the Earth which He had made His own—all things that might be to His Father's Honour; above all, that Worship, which is the one bounden duty of Creation, its use for which it exists; and Our Lord Loved us so, that for our sakes He would establish and would Himself lead—as Head of Men, as High-Priest of Men, as Priest for ever—a Worship infinitely worthy of His Infinite Father. You acknowledge, Deacon, that this would be so? To appoint such Worship would be more Divine than not to appoint it.

Douglas. Granted, Father. But you do not mean to say that Our Lord was obliged to appoint such Worship? He can deal with His Church as He likes.

Fr. O'Flanagan. Most assuredly; but it would only be fair that we should ask you to give us the most clear and unmistakeable proof that it was His Will not to appoint such Worship, and also ask if you could show us reason why He was pleased so to act. We do so thoroughly know that He is Wisdom itself, that if any dare to attribute to Him an act less wise, the proof must be clear as sight that such act is really His: if it is His, we shall then know that behind it lies hidden Wisdom, which we may not fathom, but we cannot hold a seemingly unwise Act to be the Act of Wisdom, unless the proof is beyond all question.

Douglas. But who dares to charge Him with Act of less Wisdom?

Fr. O'Flanagan. My dear Deacon, nothing, I am sure, would be further from your thoughts, but I think that, without meaning it, you and your friends do. It is wrapped up in your doctrines. He, as you say, forms a Church, a Society, to teach His Truth, to carry on His Work, to convert all nations, and He equips it with nothing that it needs for its Mission, not even with a Worship. Is this Wisdom? Would a real man do so? Did Moses so, the Prophet like unto Himself? Did the Children of Israel go into the Wilderness with no laws, no government, no worship?

Douglas. Well, but, Father, what do you say, you who speak for the Catholic Church; what Worship did Our Lord leave?

Fr. O'Flanagan. Himself -Christ is our Worship.

Jones. The Deacon is doubtful if you mean that Christ is the Person Whom we worship.

Fr. O'Flanagan. We do indeed Worship Him, but I do not mean that here. I mean that He is the Worship Whom we offer to God and the Father; that He has put Himself into our hands to be so used, that such Worship began no later than the first Whitsunday, nay! no later than the eve before His death, that the One Worship of His Father ceased not by the provision of this most Wise Son for an instant, and that on this poor earth we are able to offer unceasingly a Worship as divine, as spiritual, as magnificent, as all prevailing, as pleasing to Almighty God, as the Worship of Heaven itself. Nay! it is the same Worship.

Douglas. You speak, Father, of something great and grand. I do not know that I can master it quite.

Fr. O'Flanagan. It will grow upon you, Mr. Douglas. Keep to this thought, a strange one though it seems to come to you from a Catholic—Christ is our Worship. Not music, not singing, not glowing gold and silver, not grand processions, not splendid Vestments; though all these were away, our Worship remains as great, as Infinite, as availing, for Christ, Who changes not, is our Worship.

Douglas. I know, Father, that you will like me to be clear. Do you mean this? Do you mean that we may take all that Christ did, all He suffered, and offer each suffering and agony to the Father as a Worship; holding up to Him and presenting in thought each separate mystery, full as it is of Worship of His Father, of bitterness borne for His Father, of tenderest Love of Man. Is this what you mean by Christ is our Worship?

Fr. O'Flanagan. I mean that also; but I mean more than that. But as you have mentioned it, let me dwell a little upon the Worship which lies in such use of Our Lord's Life and Death. Every Act of Our Lord's Life on earth was an Act of Worship: not indeed an Act of public worship, but although hidden, an Act of the most perfect and pleasing Worship possible. At the first instant of His becoming Man, how inconceivably great must have been the Act by which He dedicated and offered to His Father the whole of His Life on earth; by which He was able to acknowledge "My Father is greater than I"; and emptying Himself, and annihilating Himself, knowing His created Nature to be in itself Nothing, was able to prostrate Himself, and with Himself the Race of which He was Head, before the Father, Whom He adored as the Creator in Whom is Life.

Douglas. This was not public worship.

Fr. O'Flanagan. No: but there were public Acts of Worship also by which He adored. As Head of a sinful race He is circumcised; He presents Himself in the Temple: He is about "His Father's

Business" at the age of twelve. He sanctifies, and puts marvellous power with a devotion not known before into the Divinely ordered Worship of the Temple. But when the Supreme Act of Worship draws near, that Act for which He had longed, in which all other Acts, all Acts of Worship since the world began, were gathered up, how still more does He abase Himself; sinking to the ground in His Agony a Worm and no Man; how does he multiply "annihilations" upon Himself; judged and condemned by His own creatures; scourged as the criminal of criminals; a bye word among men; mockery and scorn of all creation in His mock crowning; trampled upon; spat upon; and all this but as the preparation to the Grand Act of unspeakable Worship in which He spreads His Guiltless Hands for three hours before the Father and accepts, as Head of our Race, the punishment of the Cross—the Sinless bearing the Curse of Sin, Life welcoming the annihilation of Death.

To offer up all these Acts of Divine Worship, one by one, dwelling upon them, entering into them, making them our own, would not this be a worthy form of public worship, and a form in which every one might commend his own particular needs, even his sticking in and his drawing out of teeth, without irreverence to God?

Douglas. Have you Catholics any such public worship? What is it?

Fr. O'Flanagan. A worship which we may each use privately or a Parish Priest may use publicly in his church.

Douglas. What do you call it?

Fr. O'Flanagan. The Rosary.

Douglas. And is this your highest form of Worship?

Fr. O'Flanagan. No; I have told you Christ is our Worship not dwelling on Him in thought, nor presenting in thought, by an Act of memory, past mysteries. Christ, the Living Christ, is our Worship.

Now tell me, was not Our Lord Himself while on this Earth our Worship; His Presence, ever living before His Father for us, was it not a shield and protection to the great Earth?

Douglas. Surely He was so.

Fr. O'Flanagan. And Heaven itself could show no Worship like it. There is nothing more spiritual than an Angel: those Blessed Spirits worshipped the Father in Spirit and in Truth, and had offered that wholly-spiritual Worship from the first moment of their Being. Yet the whole Host of Angelic Spirits, those twelve Legions of Angels keeping guard on the battlements of Heaven, can show no

Worship such as our poor sin-stained rebellious Race is offering now, in the Act of Crucifixion.

Douglas. That is so, Father. All Worship was gathered in that grand Act.

Fr. O'Flanagan. And this was public Worship. Truly all did not know who stood around that most High Altar on which the Victim hung, in what Act they were taking part; but Mary, His Mother, knew, who owed her Motherhood, her Sinlessness, the untold Graces of the thirty-three years, to that grand Act of Worship; John knew as He accepted the trust of Sonship to the Mother, the dignity of Brother to the Friend Who loved him; poor weeping Magdalen knew as her sins became white as snow in that cleansing Fount of Blood; the suffering Thief knew, as through that grand Act of Worship there came to him certainty of a Paradise to be won that day; the Saints who rose from their graves knew, as they saw fulfilled those old Acts of Worship which were but types; and St. Peter knew, seeking forgiveness with bitter tears for his cruel faithlessness: it was an Act of Public Worship before Angels and Men, and it was a Public Worship which was ours—Human Worship—its Scene on Earth, its Victim a Man, its Priest a Man, its surroundings, its Ritual, of necessity human. It is the Glory of Earth that so it worshipped God.

Doulgas. Indeed no words you can heap together can come near the splendour and magnificence, the tenderness, the human sympathy, with which the Son glorified the Father.

Fr. O'Flanagan. And now tell me, Deacon Douglas, Our Lord having so enabled this poor Earth of ours to bring forth to His Father from its poverty, the grandest, sublimest, and yet most human of Worship, having made this little world the Heaven of Heavens, will He, still Loving His Father, still Loving us, leave the poor world naked of all Worship?

Jones. It would go on during the forty days.

Fr. O'Flanagan. True: that Hand-pierced, Foot-pierced, Side-pierced Body, with all Its glory, all the wondrous spiritual properties, the more than bodily gifts of a Risen Body, that transfigured Body, though the glory of the Transfiguration was still hidden, would still be the Worship of the Father all the forty days and forty nights. And suddenly all is black—all night. How can it be good for us that He should go away?

Douglas. The Holy Spirit was to come.

Fr. O'Flanagan. Yes: but does the Holy Spirit, according to you who are still quarrelling as to what your worship ought to be, continue or restore Public Worship, or replace or fulfil the old grandeur of the Temple Worship, by a Worship at once more true, more spiritual, more real, more worthy of the Son of God than any Worship seen before on earth. Ours are the last days, the days when Religion has reached its height, being established by God Himself, and is the Worship carried on in figure for so long, carried on in His Own Person finally, to cease suddenly and all be night? This the reward of the Crucifixion, that earth shall honour the Father less than ever?

Douglas. You put it in a strong light; I will think of it. And you say?——

Fr. O'Flanagan. Earth has to-day a Worship as grand as during the three hours; a Worship that cannot die cannot fail; the same Worship, and that Worship—the Living Christ.

I fear I have tired you, as I certainly have tired myself. Take care of him, Jones.

TALK V.

"Christ is our Worship."

Jones. I wanted to tell you, Father, before the Deacon comes, that you have puzzled him about the worship.

Fr. O'Flanagan. Does he see—this is the main thing that it is more to the honour of Our Lord, more worthy of Him, that He should have provided for the Worship of His Father, and have given His Church such a stay and comfort and support, and others who are not of His Church such a means of conversion, as lies in a fitting public worship, than not so to have provided, leaving His followers to do—as the Deacon and his comrades are doing now, poor fellows—to guess at what is His Will in the matter of Worship from stray hints and scattered instances here and there in the Scriptures.

Jones. Yes; I think he sees that, but he is puzzled with your words, "Christ is our Worship."

Fr. O'Flanagan. The very idea of Worship though they would be offended if I told them so -has so utterly gone out of England since the Reformation, that it is difficult for people to grasp it now.

We must go on talking about it, and by degrees I trust it will dawn upon our friend. Ah! here he comes.

Welcome, Deacon. You've been thinking over our last talk?

Douglas. Yes, Father! And I see clearly how nice it would have been if Our Lord had been pleased to leave us a settled Worship of His Father: and, of course, if He had, it would have been far greater and more perfect, and more spiritual, than any other Worship that had gone before; but I can't see that it is in the Scriptures, and I can't quite make out what you mean when you say "Christ Himself is our Worship."

Fr. O'Flanagan. Have patience, Mr. Douglas, this is a deep subject, and can't be mastered, so as to be familiar to you, in an hour. Tell me which, under the old Law, was the greater Worship of the two—the Worship of the Synagogue or the Worship of the Temple?

Douglas. Surely, Father, the Worship of the Temple.

Fr. O'Flanagan. The Worship of the Synagogue was not so old as the Temple Worship?

Douglas. Not nearly so old: it did not begin, I believe, or at all events was not in full use until the Captivity, when men could no longer get to the Temple Services.

Fr. O'Flanagan. It was not ordered then directly from Heaven; did not go with the people in the wilderness?

Douglas. No, Father.

Fr. O'Flanagan. And what was the difference between the two ways of Worship?

Douglas. Well! in the Temple was Sacrifice, in the Synagogue prayer; the Synagogue Service was more like ours prayers, and reading of the Scripture, and hymns, I think, and preaching.

Fr. O'Flanagan. Yes; in some points it was exactly what you do now, and in some it differed. There was a set form of Service as in the Church of England, a regular liturgy; and there was a First and Second Lesson; and as with you, or something like you, there was no absolutely fixed minister whose duty it was to lead the devotions; the congregation or its principal men chose whom they pleased if not under thirteen years of age, and anyone could be called upon to read the Scriptures and anyone to interpret them into the tongue then spoken, for the Scriptures, you know, after the Captivity were in a dead tongue; the Synagogues were, so far, very free Churches, as you would call them. However, do we find Our Lord approving of this form of service?

Douglas. Yes, certainly; He took part in it frequently, and worked some striking miracles and spoke of some important truths at the Services of the Synagogue.

Fr. O'Flanagan. Most certainly He approved it: sanctioned and blessed it with His own frequent presence in Boyhood and Manhood, and took part in it as Minister; but which was the greater Worship of the two—was it in the Temple or the Synagogue?

Douglas. I suppose the Temple.

Fr. O'Flanagan. Immeasurably greater the Temple: every Synagogue was so built that it turned towards the Temple; its Liturgy was modelled on the Temple Liturgy; it was the entering into and taking part in, so far as was possible at a distance, the Temple Service. No one thought other than that the Temple had *the* Worship of God; for Sacrifice was greater than the accompaniments of Sacrifice, such as the Psalms of David—Psalms of praise and petition and repentance and hope—and Prayers and Litanies suited to the sorrows and the various needs of the worshippers.

It was not the splendour of the Building, nor the splendour of the Music, nor the splendour of the Vestments, not the splendid show of the many Ministers in the thoroughly known and thoroughly practised Ceremonies it was the kind of Worship itself; and that was so great because it was the figure of the Grand Worship of the Three Hours, in which Christ was our Worship, our Victim, our Priest, in His Own grand Vestments of Holiness and Purity, with His Own grand Ritual of untold Thoughts and Devotions and Sufferings, offering Himself.

Douglas. Yes: it was that which made the Worship of the Temple greater.

Fr. O'Flanagan. And now, Mr. Douglas, which Worship would the Infinitely Loving Son, if He be Infinitely Loving, leave upon Earth for His Father, the less Worship or the Greater?

Douglas. Well, surely, Father, the Greater.

Fr. O'Flanagan. Yes; and a greater than the greater: because He did not come to carry on simply, He came to perfect and fulfil: if the Temple Worship was ordered by God, still more solemnly must the "new and old" Worship be ordered: if the Temple Worship spoke to His Father and to us of His Death, the Worship He will leave will do so still more: if the Temple Worship was full of the Spirit of God, still more full of the Spirit should be that which He would provide: if the Lamb which was to be offered was to be innocent and without spot, still more spotless must be whatever in His Worship He leaves to be offered.

Douglas. But He offered Himself on the Cross; can there be anything greater, or as great?

Fr. O'Flanagan He offers Himself still—Eternal Priest—Eternal Victim. Tell me, Mr. Douglas, God Created: He said "Let there be Light," and Light was. Has that Act ceased? Does He still create, if in a somewhat changed way?

Jones. You mean, Father, that He preserves: Preservation is the Eternal going on of Creation?

Fr. O'Flanagan. Yes: did He for a moment cease to continue that Act, all things that are would in that moment cease to be. Say, did God become Man?

Douglas. Yes.

Fr. O'Flanagan. Has He ceased to be Man? No: He has done in some sense what He came to do in Human Nature; but He still is Man, though there be a change from abasement to glory, and will be man for evermore. God is eternal and all His Acts are eternal. He was Victim and Priest on the Cross: He will be Victim and Priest for evermore.

Douglas. But we are told that He offered Himself once.

Fr. O'Flanagan. But an Action done once may, being the Act of an Ever-living God with Whom is neither Past nor Future, may—should I say more rightly, must be done for evermore; He Created once, but He Creates for evermore in the One Act.

Douglas. But once suffices; why should He offer Himself more?

Fr. O'Flanagan. Why should He do it in Heaven still? Why is He present in Heaven? and not only present, but present as a Victim with the five great Pits dug in His Hands and Feet and Side ever offering and showing Himself to the Father, when the Three Hours, aye! three moments of the Three Hours, would have sufficed, except that His Sacrifice is Eternal—the Great Heaven-Worship that goes on for ever—Creation's eternal Worship of the Creator.

Douglas. But God does not need to be reminded of His Son's Death. Can God forget?

Fr. O'Flanagan. God does not need to be reminded: but the Father may love to be reminded, and we are told that the Son Who knows the Father's mind, still bears the Five Wounds. Tell me, Deacon, does not God see all things: future as well as past?

Douglas. Surely

Fr. O'Flanagan What need, then, had Abraham to remind Him of His Son's Death by His Own Command on the top of Moriah? What need to order that men should remind Him twice a day in the

Temple, by the death of spotless uncomplaining lambs, showing forth His Death until He came? God saw the Death before it took place on Calvary as well as He sees it now. But it was in this fashion that from Abel's time He would have His Worship go up from Earth, and it is in this fashion, while His Son offers Himself in Heaven, that He will have it to go up from Earth still. It is the joy, the privilege, the happiness, the glory, that He has given to our lowly exalted Earth.

Douglas. But can any Worship we have now be as great as the Worship of the Three Hours?

Fr. O'Flanagan. If there be the same Priest and the same Victim, yes. Aye! the Love of the Son, which is beyond all Love, has found new beauties and new greatness with which to adorn its offering now.

Douglas. But you would say that He still presents Himself?

Fr. O'Flanagan. Yes; still Himself, and still as Victim; but now His Living Self, that Self which is the Joy of Angels and Men in Heaven. Actual Dying and Death are not here, though they are still described as it were and pictured, yet not present; He dieth no more: and the Victim presented now is one who is not Himself bound by death, but has led captivity captive: has bound and enslaved Death, so that His Five Wounds do not slay Him as by Nature they should do, but He slays the power of the Five Wounds. It is a Risen, Ascended, Glorified Body, with all the wondrous properties of such a Body, which, as in Heaven, is presented in the Son's Earth-Worship of the Father.

Douglas. Then this is what you mean by your words "Christ is our Worship."

Fr. O'Flanagan. Yes: the Living Christ. The Son left upon Earth the highest Worship - Sacrifice. In Sacrifice we bring a gift to God, an offering full of meaning, and containing in itself all that man ought to offer to God -all praise, all penitence, all self-surrender, all entreaty.

Each lamb offered in the Temple was a gift to God, a tribute to the King and Lord of Creation, so laden with deep meaning; and Sacrifice has this superiority, among many others, to Prayer, that while Prayer may be spoilt by the sin, the forgetfulness, the carelessness and coldness, of him who prays, it is not so with Sacrifice. Unworthiness cannot pass from the offerer to the Victim: though the Priest be impure, the Lamb remains spotless; though the Priest

be thoughtless, the speechless Lamb still speaks the same praise and honour and willing self-surrender which it cannot choose but signify. Spite, then, of the sins of man, we have in Sacrifice a Worship which cannot fail, which in itself must always be pleasing to God, even though he may be displeased with the worshipper.

Douglas. This is indeed an advantage of Sacrifice; if, however unworthy we be, we cannot destroy the honour paid to God.

Fr. O'Flanagan. If it was so with the spotless Lamb of the Temple, how much more with the Catholic Worship of to-day? Christ is our Worship. He Himself, the Living Christ: not the remembrance of Him, not the Picture and Representation of Him, but He Himself is the gift, the incomparable gift, which His Wisdom and Mercy have enabled us to bring to the Father. With such a gift the Father cannot be displeased. When shall He weary of receiving this sweet gift. Eternal are those words, that greeting with which He salutes Him: "This is My Beloved Son in Whom I am well pleased."

Nay, moreover! Though we say the careless worshipper cannot make the gift in itself displeasing, yet who does not know and feel that the offerer of a spotless gift should himself be spotless; that when the Worship is holy, the worshipper should be holy also.

Douglas. Yes, Father: that is most true.

Fr. O'Flanagan. Well, then; in our Worship there is no danger that the Father should not have at least one all-worthy worshipper. Not only is our gift, our Worship, boundlessly pure and holy: our chief worshipper is boundlessly holy too.

Douglas. Who is that?

Fr. O'Flanagan. The Priest leads the Worship?

Douglas. Yes: where there is a Priest.

Fr. O'Flanagan. There is a Priest indeed here. Christ Himself is our Worship. Christ Himself is our chief Worshipper; He leads the Worship for us, on Earth as well as in Heaven. As He was upon the Cross, so now He is Priest and Victim too: the Priest offering Himself, Whose thoughts cannot wander, Whose Memory cannot forget, Whose Love cannot be cold, Whose deep Reverence and Humility can fitly adore the Father's Majesty. He is the Gift brought to the Father, the Head of the Race which is worshipping the Father.

Now, my dear Deacon, which is fitting—that Our Lord should leave on earth no Worship, or that He should leave a Worship so

Divine, so spiritual, so pleasing, so universal, so suited to all needs of all men, as this?

Douglas. And this Worship you call?

Fr. O'Flanagan. The Mass. Good bye: there is more to say, much more; but not to-night.

TALK VI.

Grandeur in Simplicity.

Fr. O'Flanagan. Welcome! my good Deacon. I was afraid you would come no more. I must have wearied you with all my talk about the difference between Prayer and Sacrifice. But you must brace yourself for a long journey; there are still many differences to notice.

Douglas. Not tired at all, Father. If only the Truth is at the end, what matters the length of travel. The Will of Christ—that is the point. If He willed Prayer, so do I. If He willed Sacrifice, so do I. That's what I understand by Love—finding His Will out and then doing it. But, Father, may I ask you something that our Pastor bade me ask you. I was telling him what you said; If Our Lord has provided for His Father's Worship, and has provided the highest form of Worship possible, that is more to His Honour than if He has not so provided. And he said "Yes, that is true; but what authority have we for it? You know we must go for everything to Scripture. Just ask Father O'Flanagan next time, whether he can back up his argument by Scripture; for we can scarcely judge of what Our Lord has done, by what in our opinion He ought to have done."

Fr. O'Flanagan. Certainly not, Mr. Douglas, not by that only. Though it is not a weak argument, is it, to say God can do nothing unwise because He is Wisdom, nor unloving because He is Love. An argument based upon the revealed Nature of God has a solid enough foundation. But with your permission I will put off for the present the Scripture proof of my saying "Christ is our Worship." It would draw us on to discuss another deep principle. The whole question is full of them. I will discuss it, but not quite yet: for the

present we will consider another advantage of Sacrifice over a Service of Prayer.

Douglas.—What is that, Father?

Fr. O'Flanagan. What I believe you in part mean by "spirituality," though of that matter we will talk another time; the earnestness and sincerity with which men urge their individual petitions to God. To use a homely phrase, in soul as well as body each man feels where the shoe pinches. Ten worshippers side by side will have ten different petitions, and each will feel no doubt at times that he cannot join in a set form of prayer, which, because it is set, cannot well be always suited to his shifting needs. Hence the cry for free prayer. One man is in sorrow, and finds it hard to join in thanksgiving; one man is beset with sore temptation; another is tried with poverty and bankruptcy; still another with slander and false charges; a fifth with the agonies of painful illness; his neighbour is wrung by the death or, still worse, the ill-conduct of wife and children; while yet a last -for I must stop, there is no end to the varied petitions which may be brought to God -is joyous with thanksgiving for grace conferred, for temptation escaped, for child upraised from the gates of death, for soldier-son returning unscathed from battle: how shall all these mingled joys and sorrows and doubts and difficulties and petitions be brought before God in one and the same Worship unchanging in itself, and yet including all? It is done with us every day; many times a day. All bring the same gift to God; the Living Christ is their thanksgiving; the Living Christ is their cry out of the depths; the Living Christ is the submission of the broken Heart to the chastening Father; the Living Christ is their hope for gifts too great for hope; each heart is free; and while all bring the same offering—and that offering is the Heart of the Living Christ uplifted to the Father—ten thousand different prayers and promises and emotions and self-sacrifices ascend to the Father through the Living Jesus Christ Our Lord. Yet no man disturbs his fellow with his own entreaty. There is deepest silence in all that tumult of loud-voiced petition.

Here then, Mr. Douglas, we have room for the greatest and smallest prayers, even the teeth to be stuck in and the teeth to be pulled out, which show the "rough genius of Methodism." This "rough genius" is after all the chastened and refined and orderly Genius of the Catholic Church, which has satisfied all sinless wants of all worshippers for century after century.

Douglas. Ah! Father! I see those teeth stick in your throat. But you will allow that Our Lord cares "for what we shall eat," and

"what we shall drink," as well as for the more important matters of the soul.

Fr. O'Flanagan. Most surely, my dear Deacon; where can you find a more Sympathetic Heart for all manner of human wants than the Sacred Heart of the Head of the Human Race?

But now for another advantage.

I know that to you Nonconformists simplicity is very dear: you do not care, as you tell me, for those outer things which feed eyes and ears; for magnificent church, or brilliant show, or thrilling music that is so?

Douglas. You are right, Father. "Where two or three are gathered together, there am I in the midst of them." Devotion may be absent from the cathedral and present in the barn. You, as it seems to us, place your Worship in pomp of ritual, and swell of pealing organ, or the noise of loud orchestra, and multitude of sweet-voiced singers.

Fr. O'Flanagan. Mr. Douglas, this is one of the superstitions which Non-Catholics cherish concerning us.

Douglas. Superstition!

Fr. O'Flanagan. Superstition and nothing else. We have been persecuted in England, Mr. Douglas, as well as you and longer than you—and in the days of the Penal Laws did men dare, think you, to offer Christ, our Worship, with sound of church bell calling to Mass, with swell of organ, and throng of choristers. Did they not come to their worship then at peril of their lives? They crowded to the Priest's hiding-hole on the Sunday, gathering by twos and threes, which might escape notice, from far and near. What drew them? There was no music, often no preaching; no groined roof of a grand cathedral, no gold-embroidered vestments, not even loud prayers. Silent coming together, hushed devotion, but two candles in the dim lurking place, scarce sound of bell: what drew them together? The Presence of Christ. Where two or three are gathered. Yes, the words are truer with us than with you, more literally and completely fulfilled; "There am I"—the God-Man, and in Manhood as well as Godhead.

Why! every day, every Priest, if possible, says Mass throughout the world. In fewest places, from the Pope downwards, each day is the Mass offered with singing, and with ritual, and with pomp. In most places at some side altar, with one child server; often not in a church at all, but in some room where the Bishop gives permission, even Sunday Services in rooms over stables and I know not where;

often, when the Priest grows sick and old, in his own sitting-room, as reverently fitted up as may be, with a little child to serve and give the wine and water, and answer where answer is to be made—a tiny clerk—and they two are gathered in Christ's Name, and there is Christ in all His Glory, with the Vestment of His Godhead, and the splendour of the Five Wounds, and the brilliance of the mighty Angel worshippers about Him, there is He in the midst of them. We know the hidden magnificence too well to fix our hearts on any outward glory which we can add.

Douglas. But you do have splendid ceremonies.

Fr. O'Flanagan. "And a very great multitude cast their garments in the way; others cut down branches from the trees and strawed them in the way." And there was a grand choir that sang the *Benedictus*—"Blessed is He that cometh in the Name of the Lord, Hosanna in the highest." Who grumbled, Mr. Douglas?

Douglas. The Scribes and Pharisees.

Fr. O'Flanagan. Yet so right it was to make that grand display, to have that sweet strong singing, that in answer He who is meek and humble of heart says, "I tell you that if these should hold their peace, the stones would immediately cry out." "Yea, have ye never read out of the mouth of babes and sucklings Thou hast perfected praise."

Yes! at times we have our procession into Jerusalem, our open show of adoration by such poor earthly things as garments and branches of trees, and our singing children, and our exultant multitudes, and bring in the very stones, the gold and silver and the polished brass, to do homage to their and our Creator: but though we do this at times, it is not the very reality of our Worship, for Christ is Christ though He lie silent in the tomb, as much as when He rises with millions round Him on the Easter morn. Believe me that your truth, "Where two or three," is as dear to us as it is to you, and far more really fulfilled. But we call on every part of our nature to praise God—our love of beauty, our taste, our Art, all that God has given us, every part of it should praise Him.

But now let me turn to another point which shall touch the inner nature of our Worship.

Douglas. What is that?

Fr. O'Flanagan. When we poor creatures, weak in our nature, weaker still in our sins and the effects of our sins; when we poor creatures venture to approach the Divine Majesty in the splendour

of His infinite Attributes, we may come in a spirit of thanksgiving, in a spirit of contrition for sin and desire of forgiveness, or to supplicate for favours; but what do you take to be the very soul of worship, that which it would belong to us to offer if there had been no sin—that which the sinless Humanity of Our Lord would offer?

Douglas. I would rather have you tell me, Father.

Fr. O'Flanagan. Well! the creature comes to his Creator, to acknowledge that he is nothing and the Creator all; that, therefore, the Creator is his entire Lord and Master, wholly Sovereign over him, Lord of his life, of all that he is or has. In no niggard spirit do the creatures give their homage; the Creator's Infinity is their joy; their own nothingness is their joy; and they delight to express their own nothingness in every way possible to them. That their Creator permits them to be anything, to possess anything, fills them with thanksgiving; they joy to show that it is not theirs really but His, and to be held only at His Will in answer to the entreaties He bids them make; and should they by misfortune have erred by a finger's-breadth from His Will, they see the enormity of this error and are full of deepest sorrow, of greatest thankfulness when forgiven. But the source of this is the sense of His greatness, their own less than Nothingness. Read, Jones, St. John's description of Worship, in what we call, from the Greek, the Apocalypse of St. John the Apostle, but which is musically rendered with you the Revelation of St. John the Divine.

Jones. The Deacon, Father, won't understand your joke about the music.

Fr. O'Flanagan. Oh! pardon, Mr. Douglas; you know we can't acknowledge your translation of the Bible to be perfect, or in all points correct, or to have been made and to be in the hands of the people by God's Authority, if it was ever so correct. But if it is not Truth, it is intensely musical, the sweetest of English, so I call it always the music. We Irish Priests must have our joke.

Douglas. None the worse for that, Father. By all means let the Sergeant read. Where is the text?

Jones. In Chapter four, verse ten. "The four-and-twenty elders fall down before Him that sat upon the throne, and worship Him that liveth for ever and ever, and cast their crowns before the throne, saying 'Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honour and power: for Thou hast created all things, and for Thy pleasure they are and were created.'"

Fr. O'Flanagan. And again, Jones, in the next Chapter, verse eleven. He hears, in this Worship of Heaven, ten thousand times ten thousand Angels rejoicing in the power and riches and wisdom and strength and honour and glory and blessing of the Lamb, and then in verse thirteen——

Jones. "Every creature which is in Heaven and on the earth and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, heard I saying, 'Blessing and honour and glory and power be unto Him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever.'"

Fr. O'Flanagan. This, then, is the idea of Worship. The Creator all, the creature nothing. This the creatures endeavour to express by falling down, by throwing off their crowns as by right not theirs. Therefore must the Sacrifice be slain, giving up its Life, reducing itself, so far as may be, to nothing, from the first sacrifice of Abel onward, and therefore must Our Lord delight in humiliations and annihilations, emptying Himself before His Father, and casting down His Crown with the four-and-twenty elders.

Douglas. And do you say He does this in the Mass?

Fr. O'Flanagan. He is the same Living Lord Who is receiving Worship in Heaven, yet where is His Glory? Where the Glory of His Godhead? Where even the Glory of His Manhood? All is hidden. The eye of Angel sees, and the eye of Faith on earth; none else. On the Cross, in the Tomb, there was still the perfect Stature of the most beautiful of men, the Majesty, the Sweetness, the Divinity of His Human Nature: "Tell me where thou hast laid Him" is still the cry of love desiring to behold; but here to the eye is a Wafer of Bread when the Priest goes up to the Altar, and still throughout to the eye it is a wafer of bread; no human stature, no sweet Majesty of a divine Human face peeping through the Veil of Bread, nothing to compel the knee to bend or tongue to confess "Truly this is the Son of God." More completely even than upon the Cross, has He, while He reigns in His Glory at the Father's Right Hand, annihilated Himself on earth, humbled Himself in the chosen abode of Divine Humiliation to be His Father's Worship, His Father's Sacrifice, on earth.

And this brings me to another point. Our Sacrifice contains that which is itself no small part of Worship, the fullest exercise of Faith. Faith is the belief in Christ's promises; that you hold?

Douglas. Surely: our whole Religion hangs on Faith in the promise "Where two or three are gathered together, there am I in the midst."

Fr. O'Flanagan. Most fully do we believe in that as well as you. But is not Faith more? Is it not belief in "every word that proceedeth out of the Mouth of God?" He who believes ten of Our Lord's Words, and not the eleventh, is he not guilty of disbelief in all?

Douglas. Clearly; he has not real Faith in him.

Fr. O'Flanagan. Well! I am not going now into the whole Scripture argument for our Worship; but I will ask you just this: Why do you think that when Our Lord said "This is My Body," He did not mean this is My Body, but this is a figure of My Body?

Douglas. Oh! because it is so impossible.

Fr. O'Flanagan. You have answered frankly: then you will acknowledge that in accepting the words from Our Lord's Mouth as they are, in the literal sense, knowing there is nothing impossible to God, we exercise a Faith in God's Omnipotence, in His Love, in His Wisdom, in His Truthfulness, which is great, which can hardly be greater. Faith, you will grant, is greater when there is a seeming difficulty in the way of believing; when we trust only in a person's word that a thing is so, not because it is likely to be so, not because we can see how it can be so, but simply because we know the speaker to be truthful and he says it is so?

Douglas. Certainly.

Fr. O'Flanagan. Then here we have, in our Worship, the most splendid exercise of Faith, the fullest adoration of the Truth of God.

Good-bye! next time, perhaps, the argument from Scripture: and come in the best of tempers, for I may have hard things to say of you in my rough Irish way.

TALK VII.

A Hard Saying.

Jones. Father, the Deacon is not going to let you off, he tells me; you promised Scripture proof to-day. He suspects that we a little fight shy of Scripture.

Fr. O'Flanagan. Fight shy! Mr. Douglas. Why! the Scriptures are full of Roman Catholic Doctrine in every verse, Old Testament and New, Histories, Prophets, Psalms and other books of Poetry,

Gospels, Epistles, and Revelation, all nothing but Papal teaching from first to last. Only, Mr. Douglas, the Bible is a book of its own sort: it is not a manual for students, a school book, not a book of essays proving this or that point, not a creed drawn out with clear method; it is a book of parable and poetry; written for those who know, not for those who don't know; a book of hints and suggestions and allusions; a book to waken memories of things learned before; a book written for the children, not for strangers; for the Jew and not for the Heathen; for the Christian who holds the true Faith and not for those who are not Christians at all, or Christians holding the wrong Faith. Therefore don't ask me for a proof such as Euclid would give you. There is scarce one text in Scripture which could be fixed by its own plain language, with absolute certainty, to one sense. Hence it is that many times Our Lord must open the eyes of His disciples, that to those brought up in the Law He had to explain Moses and the Prophets: and hence it is that never yet has come a heresy from the Arian of old to the Unitarian of to-day which could not bring forth five or six, or a hundred, texts in its favour. I cannot give you an Euclidian proof.

Douglas. Then what proof can you give me, Father?

Fr. O'Flanagan. Certainly as good a proof, and better, than you can give me for all you draw out of your chosen text, "Where two or three are gathered together." The proof I can give is of the Bible sort. Against the doctrine which we hold no clear words of Scripture can be brought from other parts of the Holy Book condemning it: our explanation shall not be inconsistent with itself; it shall be nearer to the simple, natural, literal sense of the words; and though thus simple, it shall give a deeper meaning, a meaning more full of holy thoughts, and of thoughts worthy of the Infinite Attributes of God, than the contrary or any other meaning. But that we may lose no time, for we have much to say, let me ask you, Mr. Douglas, an abrupt question. Did Our Lord teach His Apostles more than He taught others?

Douglas. I suppose it is quite clear that He did.

Fr. O'Flanagan. Surely; far more. They were always with Him, and had an inner teaching, in which was explained to them the outer teaching to the multitude. "Unto you it is given to know the Mystery of the Kingdom of God." "Without a parable spake He not unto them, and when they were alone He expounded all things to His Disciples." "Declare unto us this parable," says Peter, confident in his Master's kindness, when he was yet without under-

standing how it could be that, some meats being still unclean, that which goeth into the mouth should not defile. At once the Great Teacher explains. "Why then say the Scribes that Elias must first come?" "Elias is come already," and they understood. And so, if you will search the Scriptures, many instances you will find of private explanations made to the Apostles; private commands and private powers given to them, as when they are sent at first to teach, and to raise the dead, and cast out devils; scenes which were shown to them only, as the Transfiguration and the Agony; discourses which they only heard, as at the Last Supper, and, above all, Prayer offered for them alone.

Douglas. Father, I will grant you all this. But how are you going to make it bear upon a Scripture proof that Our Lord left us the Mass to be the Worship of His Father?

Fr. O'Flanagan. Be patient and you shall hear. First of all, clearly understand what it is we say. We agree that it is more honourable to Our Lord to think that He left a Worship of His Father upon earth, and that the best that could be left, than to think that He left none at all? You agree?

Douglas. Yes; I will grant you this.

Fr. O'Flanagan. You say that Our Lord did not leave such a Worship, but only a promise of a Worship, and that not of the highest kind—in the words "Where two or three"—putting it on us as mere men, not Himself the Divine Head of men, to devise the Worship to be used.

Douglas. And you say?——

Fr. O'Flanagan. That the Son of God began His Father's Worship Himself; saying, the night before He died, the first Mass of the Catholic Church, and commanding that it should be continued to the world's end. That His Worship thus begun was the highest kind of Worship—Sacrifice; and the highest kind of Sacrifice, the Victim being Himself, a better victim than the blood of bulls and goats nay, the best thing that possibly could be offered; and the Priest being Himself, a Priest for ever according to the Order of Melchisedech, for ever because it is He, the living Christ, Who says Mass until the end of time.

Douglas. And do the Scriptures say this? we have always looked upon it as an emblematic Feast, not a Sacrifice.

Fr. O'Flanagan. A Feast for the worshippers is part of a true Sacrifice. A Sacrifice is like Charity, two parts in one Command-

ment: the Sacrifice is the love of God, the feeding on the Sacrifice is the love of men; but these two must not be parted. Our Lord said Mass that evening as His Priest says Mass to-day: lifting up the Worship to the Father, uniting men together by the Communion. Himself the Sacrifice, and Himself also in as true and real a sense the Feast. He died in the Flesh, and in the Flesh He is consumed by the Banqueters.

And I say, that thus explaining the account of Our Lord's great Action on the day before His Death, we give an explanation which contradicts no part of Scripture, falls in with all parts, and gives a deep, divine, literal, intensely spiritual sense to Scripture words, worthy of their Divine Writer, worthy of the Divine Actor of Whom they speak. It is we alone who honour Scripture by the Divine Sense given to every Divine Word.

Douglas. Show me further what you mean:

Fr. O'Flanagan. In the first place, the beginning of the final Worship of the Father which should be the perfection of all Worship, would be of all things important: I cannot give Euclidian proof, but like Euclid I may demand some things to be granted to me, and first—The Worship of the Creator is the most important duty of the Creature.

Douglas. I grant it.

Fr. O'Flanagan. And it falls in with its importance that Our Lord should have caused its institution to be related by three Evangelists—and that which happens to no other fact in the Gospels also by the Evangelist who was born out of due time, St. Paul, who heard it from the lips of his Divine Teacher in the wilderness. Is it likely that this care would be taken for a mere Symbol to be performed about once a month; you don't, I think, mostly do it oftener, and some of you never do it at all.

Moreover the Gospels give it as a matter to be narrated by itself for its own sake, not like your "where one or two," told as the end of a discourse introduced by a strife among the Apostles. This does not look like the solemn proclamation of a Worship, a Church, or anything of first importance: does it?

Douglas. Not so like, I grant, as proclaiming it four times, and as a subject wholly by itself.

Fr. O'Flanagan. If this is the proclamation of the Worship of God, it is most suitable that it should have been proclaimed by Act

as well as Word, not by word alone, as with your "where two or three"; and that it should have been proclaimed exactly at the moment when the Evangelists tell us it was.

Douglas. That was?

Fr. O'Flanagan The last evening of His life. The Worship of Prophetic Sacrifice was over. The last Lamb, offered in prophetic type of His Death, had been slain. The shadows were past, the reality was close at the doors. The Offering in the Temple could be no more true, or true only in another sense. Unless therefore the Worship of the Temple pass at once into another Worship, His Father will be left without pleasing Worship upon earth at all, and that I hold to be impossible—that an infinitely loving Son, having Human Nature, should leave his outraged and insulted Father without atoning Worship on earth until time's end or for so much as a moment; and leave His poor erring brethren without adequate means of showing forth their contrition and their love. The Worship then of His Father ends the Worship of His Father begins.

And the new life of the new Worship must be, like the Resurrection itself, of a higher kind. The old Worship had been shadow, it is impossible that the new Worship shall be shadow still; aye, and shadow of a less meaning kind; the old Worship was Sacrifice and also Feast; the new Worship, so far as is contained in your Lord's Supper, is Feast only: the old Worship was strikingly prophetic, and, had it gone on after the Crucifixion, would have been as strikingly commemorative of the death of Our Lord; the new Worship, so far as it consists of Psalm and Hymn and reading and preaching, does not speak of the death at all, and so far as your Lord's Supper is concerned equally fails to commemorate the death. There is nothing in the mere eating of a morsel of bread and mere drinking of a drop of wine that would be like the death of a man.

Douglas. But is not that the same with you? You also have bread and wine.

Fr. O'Flanagan. No; it is very far from being the same with us. I cannot go into every detail of the doctrine of the Mass; but according to this doctrine, though Our Lord die not, yet does He appear before His Father with a living Picture, truer than that Temple-death of the Lamb, of the separation of His Body from His Blood; and this is a commemoration of His death, He Himself commemorates His own death, offering Himself to His Father as the

Lamb that was slain, and that not only by the presence, as in Heaven, of His Five Wounds.

Douglas. I do not quite understand; but, of course, I believe that your doctrine is so, when you say it is.

Fr. O'Flanagan. And now for another point. In the proclamation of a Worship, would our Lord more probably use a Command, or only an encouraging allusion? To treat His Father's Worship as important enough for a solemn command would be to do it honour. With you He does but make an encouraging promise, which may refer also to other matters besides worship, but gives no command.

Douglas. Where is the command with you?

Fr. O'Flanagan. "This do in remembrance of Me," a distinct order. "This do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of Me," again a distinct command.

"This do," twice repeated, herein is the command. It is well to notice the word "do:" we might expect more naturally, "this eat," and "this drink," it is not, but this *do;* and the word used by St. Luke and again by St. Paul, is the word that is proper in the Greek for the performance of a Sacrifice: "this sacrifice ye in remembrance of Me." And by those words He established upon earth as His last Act before He died, the grand Worship of His Father, the offering of Himself; nor only this, but He provided at the same time the form in which that worship was to be lifted, the form which He Himself had used "this is My Body, etc."; and also He provided Ministers for the carrying out of that worship, ordaining them there and then, and giving them the needful powers and Grace, "This do ye." Which is better, Mr. Douglas, that Our Lord in the supreme moment of His loving delivery of Himself for His Father and for us, should have made no clear and full and worthy provision for His Father's worship, or that He should have left a worship so complete in all points, one which He as Head of our Race, as our Teacher, our Example and our Guide, Himself commences.

Douglas. But it is so wonderful. How could the apostles receive at once so great a doctrine, so marvellous a miracle, as that Our Lord held Himself in His own Hand, and standing before them in the familiar form and figure, should as really, as He stood there, have given Himself to each one of them and have entered into each?

Fr. O'Flanagan. Let us apply now what we said at first about the Apostles having an "inner teaching." We may have no doubt that, if it was given to them to know the mystery of the Kingdom of Heaven even in the first year of their Ministry, they would not be left in darkness concerning a chief mystery of which He spoke at the end of three years of faithful companionship and obedience. If they were taught the parable of the Sower, and the parable of no pollution contained in meats, they would surely be taught the last parable of Love, "this is My Body, and this is My Blood." Whatever the words mean, they would, as they were at the last Supper, know the meaning.

And we are the more certain, because St. John, the one Evangelist, whose witness we have not had as yet, tells us the first mention of this parable, and shows us unmistakeably that Our Lord prepared His Apostles for this wondrous doctrine and meant His words in their plain literal sense.

Douglas. Where is that?

Fr. O'Flanagan. In the Sixth Chapter of St. John's Gospel, where Our Lord speaks of Himself as Food—of His Flesh as Meat, and His Blood as Drink. Certainly this was a Parable of Parables needing explanation. Let us go shortly through the account. It was after the second multiplication of the loaves; crowds sought Him, yet half-believing or not believing; and He bids them "Labour not for the meat which perisheth, but for that meat which endureth unto everlasting life, which the Son of Man *shall* give you," a human gift for it is the Son of Man who gives, and no gift given as yet, such as Faith and Teaching, for it was a gift to come.

They ask then for a "sign from Heaven," not thinking the multiplication to be enough. The Miracle of Moses was greater, his bread came from Heaven, yours is but earthly bread multiplied; his continued for forty years, yours but twice repeated in three years: if you are the Messias you should work the greatest; give us a convincing sign and let it be from Heaven.

Now a sign must needs be an outward thing something to be heard or seen or felt and Our Lord does not say that He will give them no such sign, but on the contrary: My Miracle shall be greater than that of Moses; His Manna did not really come from the Very Presence of God in Heaven, My Manna is from out the Bosom of God Himself. You see that greater Miracle before you, I am the Bread of Life I am come down from Heaven; and the greater Miracle is

that you shall be able to feed on Me, and the bread that I will give is My Flesh which I will give for the life of the world, not for Jews only, but for all; not for forty years but all time. "The Jews therefore——" read, Jones.

Jones. "The Jews therefore strove among themselves, saying, How can this Man give us His Flesh to eat?"

Fr. O'Flanagan. Parable of parables indeed. Most difficult to understand. And yet how easy to explain if Our Lord only meant, "eat My Flesh in figure." Our Lord does not so explain, but enforces a most difficult and distasteful truth in strongest words.

Jones. "Verily, verily; I say unto you, Except ye eat the Flesh of the Son of *Man*, and drink His Blood, ye have no life in you. Whoso eateth My Flesh and drinketh My Blood, hath eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day. For My Flesh is meat indeed, and My Blood is drink indeed. He that eateth My Flesh and drinketh My Blood, dwelleth in Me and I in him."

Fr. O'Flanagan. Greater promise this, than the promise of your text "where two or three." But if all that Our Lord meant was, you are to eat a morsel of bread and drink a drop of wine in remembrance of Me, why repeat so emphatically four times, My Flesh and Blood, when He knew that He was offending the Jews, and many of His own disciples. They who heard, took His words in the literal sense:—"This is a hard saying:" what is there hard in a morsel of bread and a drop of wine? Many "went back, and walked no more with Him." Was it like that Merciful Heart to let them go, when a word would have put things right? But they went and in such numbers that He said to the twelve, "Will ye also go away?" And when He looked into the heart of Judas, and sees there a disbelief of His words, a distrust in Him as a Teacher, why does He say "Have not I chosen you twelve and one of you is a devil?"

Douglas. They are strong words.

Fr. O'Flanagan. They are strong words indeed, and one cannot think that a Heart of Infinite tenderness would use terms so strong, terms equal to a sentence at the last day, except for great fault, strongest guilt, which it is difficult to discern in the fact that Judas was puzzled by a parable put in strong words, but capable of simplest explanation.

Douglas. Then how do you explain the passage?

Fr. O'Flanagan. With us all is consistent. Every one of those who heard, clearly took Our Lord's Words literally. It was His Flesh that they really were to eat, His Blood that they really were to drink. To eat a man's flesh was a proverb of hate; to drink a man's blood was abhorrent to nature, nor to nature only but to their law. In Leviticus vii. 26—27. "Ye shall eat no manner of blood, of fowl or of beast, in any of your dwellings. Whatsoever soul it be that eateth any manner of blood, even that soul shall be cut off from his people." A hard saying indeed! His other parables were wont to be full of beauty; if this be a parable it can have no beauty to a Jew. Yet the Apostles, who had asked for explanation of a dark saying when they saw it offended the Pharisees, yet ask for no explanation of this when they are left alone with Him by the desertion of crowds. Clearly then they take it for no parable, but for simple literal fact, that they were to eat their Master's Flesh and drink their Master's Blood. And why were they good and Judas a devil? Because, hard as the words were, they believed in their Master—His words were the words of eternal life. But Judas did not. And he continued in his disbelief though the stern words here spoken were doubtless meant as a merciful warning, and because he eat that Flesh and drank that Blood unbelieving and unrepentant, at the eating Satan entered into him, he became a Devil.

It is hard indeed to think that the Loving Pastor would let one of His chosen sheep go from Him, unless it were of necessity for the world's salvation that His Words should be taken in their clear literal sense.

Douglas. Even if we grant that Our Lord's Body is really present, how do you show that it is present as a Sacrifice and not as a Feast?

Fr. O'Flanagan. A Sacred Feast without a Sacrifice, without first an offering of the sacred thing to God, would have been a thing unheard of since the world began. The offering makes the Feast Sacred. A Sacrifice without a Feast there might be, the victim being wholly given to God; but a religious Feast without a Sacrifice, love of Man without love of God, never. And as this was before the Sacrifice of the Cross there would be no Sacrifice at all going before. "I came not to destroy but to fulfil" would be a meaningless text if this were so. All the share in the victims of the Temple, all religious feasts since the beginning of the world would be destroyed if this were so.

Douglas. Then I am to tell my Pastor that your Scripture-proof of your Worship is the account of the first celebration of the Lord's Supper.

Fr. O'Flanagan. Yes: but remember not an Euclidian but a Bible-proof. Take our interpretation and there comes forth a sense worthy of God and His Scripture: worthy of the Gospel scheme which gives Glory to God and Grace to man. Take your interpretation and there comes forth a sense meagre and sterile, barren of God's Glory and of man's union with God.

Douglas. Explain.

Fr. O'Flanagan. The Last Act of God's visible life on earth, must perforce be more full of Love, more Divine, than any Act before. With us it is so. He founds His Father's worship; He begins it Himself. That He may do it, He calls His Power and His Wisdom, both Infinite, to the aid of His Love. He annihilates Himself, as not in His Life-time before. He has done no Act like it in His Life-time. He provides for the comfort of His followers as for the Honour of His Eternal Father. Leaving us, He still remains with us, a Man in His manhood with His fellow-men. He fulfils all that is past by a better Sacrifice, Himself: by a richer Sacrificial Feast, Himself. He provides the form of His Sacrifice, the Words He uses Himself; and Ministers of His Sacrifice, the Priests of whom the first were His Apostles. Is not this a worthy ending of God's Life on earth?

Douglas. And is not our interpretation as full of meaning?

Fr. O'Flanagan. No: On your interpretation He does but institute an empty rite, a rite to be filled, if it is to be full at all, by the imagination or by the virtues of the worshipper. He has not secured His Father's worship. Where there is no imagination, no virtues, there is no worship; whether it is little or great depends upon man: put it at the best and it cannot be a worship worthy of the Infinite God.

God then, Who came to fulfil, finds Shadows on earth, leaves less perfect Shadow behind, a mere shadowy rite; and, according to you, not even His Father's principal worship: His last Act of Divine Life was to establish a worship some twelve Sundays in the year, and then not of necessity done by all. Thus you make of none effect those terrible words, "Except ye eat the Flesh of the Son of Man and drink His Blood ye have no life in you."

Douglas. Then your Mass of to-day comes down from the last Supper?

Fr. O'Flanagan. From Our Lord's saying the first Mass after the Lord's Supper.

But now enough of worship; next time we shall pass naturally to what you call your polity—to the question bound up with the question of worship—whether or not He left on earth a Priesthood, an Order of Priests, supernaturally endowed. You say no.

Douglas. Well! Father. I will hear what you have to say before I say anything. I am very grateful to you for taking all this trouble.

Fr. O'Flanagan. God bless and guide you, my dear boy.

St. Andrew's Press, Barnet.

The Reformation at St. Martin's, Leicester.

BY DUDLEY BAXTER, B.A.

It is always pleasant to study history at its sources. When we trust ourselves to the historians, although we may profit by their skill and knowledge, we feel, also, that they may be reading into their story some prepossessions of their own. But, when brought face to face with the original records, we know that we have the facts themselves just as they were, and can hear them tell us their own tale. Such sources of English history are the Churchwardens' Accounts which in some parishes have escaped the ravages of time, and they are particularly interesting for their entries during the reigns of the last three Tudors. If any one desires to make a study of continuity, and discover whether it did or not persist through that period of drastic measures, he could not well do it more profitably than by reading through these old registers.

Several of them have already been laid under contribution for this purpose, but the more of them we can have the better, and we can obtain an excellent supply from Nichols' *History of Leicestershire*, vol. iv. pt. ii. of which gives copious extracts from the Churchwardens' Books of St. Martin's Church in that town.

St. Martin's was the largest church in Leicester,

and its history has been intimately connected with the history of the town. The two most prominent of the town guilds were founded in it—the Guilds of Corpus Christi and of St. George. The Guild of Corpus Christi held, as it always does, the first rank, out of respect to the Blessed Sacrament, and we can appreciate its position in the town when we learn that its two joint-masters were associated with the Mayor in the civic government. The chapel of the guild was the Lady chapel at the east end of the south aisle.

St. George's Guild had its chapel at the west end of the same aisle, and there in the pre-Reformation days might be seen the statue of St. George in full armour and on horseback. This Guild appears to have been very popular, and enjoyed very peculiar privileges. Every year between St. George's day and Whit Sunday, there was a procession of the Saint called the Ride of St. George, which must have been a gorgeous pageant. All the townsmen were specially summoned to it by the Mayor, and were bound to attend. We shall see traces of it as we read the Churchwardens' entries.

Besides this Ride of St. George, there was another similar festival on Whit Monday, which was held with great solemnity. Two processions started, one from St. Martin's Church, carrying with it the statue of St. Martin, and the other from St. Mary's Church, carrying with it a statue of our Blessed Lady. The common terminus of the two processions was the Church of St. Margaret, where a special service was held. Of this procession, also, the entries bear many traces.

To these entries let us now pass, and we may begin with one which gives us a picture of some of these processions, perhaps that of Whit Monday. Nichols summarizes them thus:

In the year 1498, in the procession there were 12 Apostles, 14 banner bearers, and 4 that bear up the canopy: each allowed one penny for their labour, 1523; but other years they used to be feasted and nothing given them. They had musick went before the Mary, sometimes a harp for which paid 4d., 1507 2d., 1523 a minstrel 2d., with these virgins went in procession, spent on them 3d., 1518.

N.B.—The Apostles names were wrote on parchment for which they paid 4d., 1499. They used to spend in points 1d., tucking strings and whipcord 2d., gloves two pair 2d., which in 1505 are said to be for God and St. Thomas of India.

The "Apostles" were twelve men who represented each an Apostle, and bore his name written on parchment.

Next comes an entry which is interesting as showing the antiquity of an expedient for collecting money which, though with somewhat changed accompaniments, is still in vogue. For a church ale was a sort of subscription dinner at which money was collected for Church purposes.

1498. Received of the church ale on our Lady's Assumption, 2s. 7d. ob.

Item, bread on our Lady day Assumption, 2d.

Next we come to some entries about vestments and processions. The use of vestments and processions belongs to the outward expression of belief in the Sacramental system, and particularly in the Holy Mass. Hence from the following entries testifying first to their use, then to their alienation,

and to their subsequent recovery followed again by alienation we can obtain the clearest evidences of what the "Reformers" thought about the Mass and the sacraments, and can judge for ourselves whether those Anglicans who are now restoring the use of vestments and candles are in so doing departing from or merely returning to the "Reformation settlement," for in this, as in other respects, they have been correctly termed "Reformers of the Reformation."

1507. Paid for a day's work mending all the red copes of silk, 4d.

Item, a day's work, mending the red suit of velvet, 4d.

Item, two days' work, mending the Trinity banner and the great streamer of silk, 10d.

1544. Paid to Robert Gouldsmith, for mending a chalice belonging to St. George's chapel, and a pix, 1s. 4d.

Paid on Palm Sunday to the Prophete . . . and for ale at the reading the passh'on, 2d.

For the procession at St. Margaret's on Whit-monday to the vicar, priests, and clerks, 1s. 1d.

For bread and ale that day, 1s.

To the sumners [collectors] at St. Margaret's for the offering [offertory], 8d.

For other charges at the procession on Whit-monday, 10s.

"The Prophete" was one deputed to sing the prophecy at the beginning of the Palm Sunday service. "At the reading of the Passion" of course means "on occasion of reading it," that is, after the service. Money in those days was worth about twenty times as much as in ours. Thus, their 4d. was about equivalent to our 6s. 8d.; their 1s. 4d. to our £1 6s. 8d., and so on.

1545. Two amusing entries are worth noting:

Paid for three quarts of claret wine that was given to my Lord Judge's chaplain, 9d.

A gallon of wine for my lord of Lincoln's chancellor when he preached at St. Martin's, cost 12d.

Paid to the ringers for king Henry the Eighth, 12d. [that is, when the bells tolled for his death, which took place in 1547].

Other items are:

Paid for charcoal on Easter even 2d. [for the New Fire]. The church and particularly the nave were this year repaired; chief workmen 7d. per day; ordinary labourers 4d.

These entries bear witness to the policy of Henry VIII., which was, whilst enforcing a repudiation of Papal Jurisdiction and destroying the monasteries, to leave the old Catholic ceremonies practically untouched, and so encourage the notion that the changes made had not touched the substance of the ancient religion. But in 1547 Edward VI. came to the throne, and then Cranmer, who was Protestant to the core, finding a sympathizer in the Regent Somerset, had everything his own way. We know from the general history of the country how he laid violent hands on the Liturgy, called in the old Service Books, caused the altars to be overturned and tables substituted. It is terrible to read of the sacrileges of those days, and the manner in which the old churches, rendered splendid by the loving faith of past generations, were turned into dismal, mutilated preaching-houses. But the accounts shall tell their own tale, and a sad one to Catholics. Immediately a great sale took place.

1547. The parcels of the goods that was sold forth the church of St. Martin's the 20th day of March, in the first year of the reign of Edward the Sixth, by the grace of God, &c.

Item. Received of Mr. Mayre for old gere, 5d.
„ „ Mr. Tayllor for one vest and an albe, 12d.
„ „ Mr. Damport for two vestments [*i.e.*, chasubles], 6s. 8d.
„ „ Mr. Cotton for two hangings for the high altar of white damask and purple velvet, 33s.
„ „ Mr. Vycker for an old vest of green, 2s. 2d.
„ „ Mr. Manbe for altar-cloths, 12s.
„ „ „ for an organ case, 3s.
„ „ Mr. Damport for altar-cloths, 3s.
„ „ „ altar-cloth of red velvet and white damask, 17s.
„ „ Richard Davy for two vestments of blue velvet, 29s.
„ „ „ two yellow copes, 13s.
„ „ „ a blue velvet cope, 18s.
„ „ Mr. Manby for three white copes, 17s.
„ Sold to Mr. Reynold, one canopy, 20s.
„ „ „ one vestment red, 6s. 8d.
„ „ Mr. Cotton one pall of blue velvet, 13s. 4d.
„ „ Thomas Hallam, one green cope of Brydgs [Bruges] sattin, and an altar-cloth of the same, 10s.
„ Received of Willim Odam for the rood light, 7s. 8d.

Paid to Robert Sexton and his fellow, for taking down tabernacles and images, 22d.

Received on St. Ch . . . and at Easter of the parishioners at God's borde, 15s. 3d. . . .

The above list gives one some idea of the number of vestments the old parish churches once had. "God's borde" is of course here the communion-table, substituted for the discarded altar. We next find the churchwardens selling the Church plate at Coventry.

Item, Received of Mr. Tallamore, then mayor of Coventry, the 11th day of August, for certain plate sold to him, as appeareth by his particular bill thereof, £24 5s. 10d.—

an enormous sum in modern money.

Item, Paid in expences, two days at Coventry, when we sold the plate there, for our horses and ourselves, 3s. 4d.

Still the unholy auction proceeded.

1547. Mem. That Simon Nyx and Thomas Hallam, churchwardens, William Manby and John Eyryk, Hew Barlow and William Bladvyn, then hath sold these parcels following, by the commandment of Mr. Mayor and his brethren, according to the King's Injunctions, in the year of our Lord 1546, and the first year of the reign of Edward the Sixth.

First, sold seven cloths that hung before the roodloft, price 3s. 8d.

The "rode cloth" was a veil or hanging which used to be drawn in front of the rood-loft during Lent, so as to cover the rood or crucifix; in pre-Reformation days during this holy season the altars, images, and pictures were veiled or covered with special "clothes," mention of which occur several times in these Accounts, while the great Lent veil was suspended between the choir and the altar.

Sold to Nicholis Eyrike a tabernacle 2s. 8d. Other tabernacles in the account were sold for 1s., two for 5s.; another for 3s. [tabernacles here mean niches, canopies, &c.]

Sold to Henry Mayblay the horse that the George rode on, price 12d. Sold to Jhon Eryyke the organ chamber, 8s. 6d. Sold to Simon Nyx the florth and vente (?) that the George stood on, 3s.

Sold to Mr. Newcome 100 pounds weight of the organ

pipes, 16s. A man of Stoughton Grange bought as much alabaster as came to 1s. 8d.; and another man as much as came to 10d.

A large quantity of brass was also sold by the hundredweight.

Sold to Rychard Raynford the Sepulchre light, weighing three score and 15 pounds, at 3½d. per pound—21s. 10½d.

This is an interesting item which requires some explanation: while the Blessed Sacrament was reserved in the Easter Sepulchre (after the manner to be presently explained) lights were placed around and these often were thirteen large wax tapers symbolizing our Lord and His Apostles. The chief one, which represented our Lord, "the Sepulchre Light," was usually, as in this case, of enormous size.

Eight pound of wax at 3½d. per lb. [from which the candles were made]; and so all the whole that is already sold cometh to £13 2s. 2½d.

Item, paid for an Homily for sir William the parish priest, 12d.

By the "Homily" is meant a copy of the First Book of Homilies which had just been issued by royal authority and commanded to be everywhere used.

From other items in this year, we gather that a few of the old Catholic ceremonies were retained until the appearance of Edward VI.'s second Book of Common Prayer; also the procession on Whit Monday continued during the first two years of this reign.

In the year 1548 we find the following items:

April 13th. Item, paid to the King's Majesty, 3s. 4d.
Paid to sir William, the parish priest, for washing of his surplice, 3d.; for a surplice cloth for sir William, 6s.; and for making the same, 20d.
For the holy lofe the fourth day of March, 3d. [and so also upon other days.]

This is an interesting entry, revealing as it appears to do, how little sympathy the people felt with the inroads into their ancient worship. They had not much courage to resist the royal orders so far as they were pressed upon them, but they kept to their old customs as much as they safely could. The holy loaf was the "Blessed Bread," or *Pain Béni*, still distributed in some French churches.

1549. Sir William Bradley was then vicar.

The prefix "Sir" was given to priests in those days, and now became a distinguishing mark between the old priests and the new ministers. Thus below we shall find mention of the Protestant "Mr." Brown.

Paid for the Paraphrase of Erasmus, 10s.

This was an official English translation just issued. It was one which Bishop Gardiner characterized as full of false translations and errors, and of which he says that, "if this paraphrase go abroad, people shall learn to call the Sacrament of the Altar, 'holy bread' and a 'symbol.'"

We now come to an item which Mr. Round would term, "the Reformation in a nutshell."

For 2 chains and nails for the Bible, 5d.

Henry VIII. ordered that a Bible in English should be placed in each parish church, attached to

the wall or otherwise by a chain. It was the establishment of the Bible and Bible only rule of faith, a rule which does not seem to have worked more harmoniously in these early days than since; for the effect of these chained Bibles was that Protestant zealots gathered round them reading and disputing, in loud and angry voices, even whilst public service was going on. The scandal became so great that in Henry VIII.'s reign, only a few years after the order to place these Bibles in the churches had been issued, an Act of Parliament had to be passed which prohibited the reading of the Bible in public, or even in private, save by persons of rank and education.

But the iconoclasm proceeds:

For taking down the rood-loft, 10d.

And to crown it all—

In that year the church was white limed all over.

We are sometimes told, that at the Reformation the Church of England, still remaining the same, merely "washed her face." If we could believe in the identity between the old and the new, the proceedings, general throughout the country, of which this entry gives us a specimen, seem to show that "whitewashed her face" would be a more exact description. One shudders to think of what the Catholic parishioners must have suffered at seeing their beautiful mural decorations thus obliterated—and how beautiful they must have been we are beginning now-a-days to realize, for in some places where the whitewash has been removed, enough of the painting remains to show how once the walls must have glowed with colour.

But the work took time and still continued.

1550. Received for the holy water stoke [stoup], 16d.

Paid for work in the new quire [*i.e.*, in dismantling it], June 5. . . .

Further sale of vestments and catche coppe bells [?] [and even of the ceilings in two of the chapels.]

A book of service [Common Prayer] for the church cost 4s. 8d.

1551. Received for the table in the Rood chapel, 5s.

" " " in our Lady chapel, 6s. 8d.

These were probably the altar tables themselves.

Sale of candlesticks, bells, stoups, the vente (?) over St. George's altar, painted cloth, etc.

For two persons, a week's work, for taking down the altar in our Lady's quire, 4s. 9d. For cutting down the quire, 8d.

For painting the rood-loft, 40s.

Lent to the parish priest, sir William, of the church money, 13s. 4d.

"Painting" must have meant "daubing over"—but the price was heavy.

In 1552 a vestment press and a crown of wood covered with silver, probably once on our Lady's statue, were sold, and a "lecterne was sett up on the pulpit." 2s. was spent on "matts to be about the table," doubtless the wooden communion-table.

Finally, 3s. 4d. was paid to "a minister" to help the Vicar on a Sunday, and 5s. "for one officiating during his absence in London." Evidently the above-mentioned 13s. 4d. "of the church money" was given to the Vicar for his journey. We cannot say why he went, but as the money was lent, not given, he probably went on private business.

In 1553 the sale of vestments still continued.

What a wealth of vestments St. Martin's Church must have once owned!

Received of Nicholas Gaussun, of Nottingham, for two copes, one vestment, and two tenakyles of cloth of tesshew, one vestment, and two tenakyles of cloth of silver, and two copes, and one vestment of blue velvet, £18.

Received of Richard Dare, for a corporas case and eight shets, one towel [altar-linen], one altar-cloth, and the rowd coat [*i.e.*, rood-cloth], 38s. 4d.

A vestment of blue velvet was sold for 10s.

Received of Nicholas, goldsmith, for two shirts that was for St. Nicholas, and a hold towell, 3s. 4d.

Received of Richard Hewis for corporas case, and St. Martin's cowte [coat], and a towell of diaper work, 2s. 8d.

Received of John Wryght for 14 banner cloths, 4s.

For the priest's wages, 26s. 8d.

Of Mr. Mayor towards the priest's wages, 13s. 11d.

Paid for a book of Preaffrasys [Paraphrases], 7s.

For the new service, 5s.

For a book concerning the Rebels, that was read in the church, 16d.

The "rebels" were the Englishmen who demanded the restoration of the ancient religion, which was now being exterminated by foreign as well as English heretics, even German Lutheran soldiers being employed to crush it. The "book" must have been Cranmer's letter to the Western rebels.

But there was to be a brief respite in these destructive operations of heresy, for on July 6, 1553, the young King died, and his Catholic sister Mary ascended the throne. On the Palm Sunday following there was a meeting of the churchwardens, from the accounts of which we find that several things had been bought in at once for the use of the church "upon the old Religion." To proceed with the items.

1554. Payments to sir Richard for his wages at Easter, 30s.

Was Sir William dead, or had he to retire in favour of Sir Richard?

For two copes and a vestment of blew velvet, 20s.

For the brazen lectory, 20s. [Probably bought back again.]

To the commissioners, for two priests, 3s. 4d.

For the church bill for the collectors, 6s.

For a rood coat, 20d. for three corporas cases, 12d.

For 12 banner cloths, 2s. For a white sattin cope, 10s.

To Sir Richard for his wages 30s. at Midsummer.

For a sacring bell, 8d. [The bell rung during Mass.]

To the Queen's Commissioners, for the cope of tissue that were sold, £8 [?]

Payments. To the Sexton, for setting up the altar, and mending the church cloths, 12s.

For nine and a half yards of say, for Mr. Mayor's seat and Mrs. Mayoress, 10s. 3d.

For a red skyn for the same, 6d. For red nails for the same, 2s.

To sir William Burrows, for a Psalter, a Processioner, a Manual, and a Cowcher, 6s. 8d.

A Cowcher was a large Service-book, so called because being so large it required to lie on a reading-desk in the quire or elsewhere. Probably that mentioned was a *Vesperale*, or an *Antiphonale*.

To sir William Burrows, for packthread and canvas for the organs, 4d.

For mending the organs, for glew, nails, leather, packthread, and weights of lead to lay upon the organs, 6s.

For two candlesticks for the altar, 2s.

For a Manual, to wed, chrysten, and bury withall, 3s. 4d.

For a Mass-book and a Cowcher, 10s.

For a grayl to sing in the church on, 10s. [A book of Graduals.]

For dressing and harnesing St. George's harness, 6s. 8d. [!]

To Syngylton for a cross, 20s.

For carrying the altar stone from Mr. Mayor's house to the church, 4d.

This last is a very interesting item. Does it imply that the Mayor had preserved the holy altar-slab in the hopes of a restoration of the old religion? With this object Catholics under Edward, and again under Elizabeth, must have frequently bought in and preserved altar-slabs, chalices, and other sacred things.

Many days work and stones about the altar.

For one yard and a quarter of red sey to cover the canopy and the Sacrament, 17d.

For a pyx for the Sacrament, 2s. 6d. [Evidently the Blessed Sacrament was again reserved in the church.]

For painting the church and dressing the altar, 9s.

For a vestment and an albe, and all belonging thereto, 13s. 4d.

For 4 yards of sey cloth for the high altar, 2s. 4d., and "gatherers for the Sepulchre light" are again appointed.

1555. The preamble runs thus:

In the first and second year of the reigns of our sovereign lord and lady, Philip and Mary, by the grace of God, of England, France, Naples, Jerusalem, and Ireland, King and Queen, defender of the Faith.

Then follows;

Received for Sepulchre light, 4s.; and at another time, 7s. 8d.

For five bells [to be tolled] at the burial of Mr. Ovende, 5s. 4d.

For his lying in the church, 6s. 8d.; more at his 7th day for bells, 2s. 4d.

Payments.—For holy water stock [stoup], 5s.

For painting the Pascal stock, 14d. [Paschal candle.]
Item, for the pyx, 4d.
For oyl and cream, and mending the chrysmatory, 12d. [Hence the Holy Oils were again consecrated and in use.]
For the priest's wages for Midsummer quarter, 33s. 4d.
To sir William Hobbs, 33s. 4d. [Was he a new vicar?]
To Francis Swynsworth, for singing, 6s. 8d.
To Richard Lylling, for playing on the organs, 5s.
To Richard Mason, for making the altar in our Lady's Chapel, 18d.
For a pattern of a chalice, 11s. 3d. [? a paten and a chalice.]
For a cross and censers, 5s. 4d.
For timber, and for making the Sepulchre, 5s. [in Holy Week].
For the Sepulchre light, 4s.
For painting the Sepulchre, and a cloth for our Lady's altar, 22d. Some banners cost 3s.; and the offering at St. Margaret's, and drink there for the attendants, cost 12d.

The word "Sepulchre," which occurs so frequently, refers to an ancient custom which, as it does not belong to the Roman rite, is no longer in use in England. Before the Reformation an imitation of the Holy Sepulchre was made somewhere near the high altar on Good Friday, and after the Mass of the Presanctified the Cross which had just been venerated was deposited in it, there to wait till Easter Sunday morning. Candles were lighted in front of the Sepulchre, and it was the custom to watch there during the Friday evening and Saturday. On Easter morning the Cross was carried back in a joyful procession to the high altar. This usage went back to Saxon times, but later a third Host, consecrated on Maundy Thursday, was on Good Friday placed in a pyx sometimes set into the Cross of the Passion, and was deposited along with it in the Sepulchre.

This addition assimilated the ceremony to our modern ceremony of carrying the Blessed Sacrament to the Altar of Repose on Maundy Thursday. Still the difference of days marks the difference of the ideas underlying the two ceremonies, nor can the Altar of Repose be properly called a "Sepulchre."

Sometimes these Easter Sepulchres were temporary structures as at St. Martin's, sometimes permanent portions of the church fabric, viz., walled recesses, tombs, richly carved vaulted enclosures, or even special chapels as at York Minster and Winchester Cathedral.

A pottel of wine given to Mr. Doctor when he preached, 6d.
For a cross and sauters [psalters], 5s. 3d.
1556. Received in Lincoln farthings, 2s., etc. [these were contributions towards the maintenance of their diocesan, the Bishop of Lincoln, and are frequently mentioned].
Paid for two banner poles, 15d.
To the three shepherds at Whitsuntide, 6d. For ale and cakes at St. Margaret's, 18d. [probably connected with the annual Whit Monday pageant]. For scouring the eagle, 16d. For making the seats in Trinity chapel, 18d.
For two dinners, etc., at the Visitation, 12d.
For nine copper dishes for the rood-loft, 9s. [?]
1557. All the gatherings [collections] for the altars, 11s. 11d.
Paid for making the Rood Mary and John, 13s. 4d.
For three gallons of ale, and 4d. in cakes at St. Margaret's, 19d.
Paid for a lock for the font, 2d.
For bearing of the cross and banners, 14d.
This year were appointed two gatherers for the Sepulchre light, and two for the Rood light.

By "gatherers" are meant persons who collected money for the Sepulchre light.

1558. The gilding the Rood Mary and John cost 1s. 10d., and more later. For a strike of charcoal for hallowed fire, 5d., and so 1560. (?) NB.—Two pounds of candles at Christmas generally used.

Again, there are charges for the Whit Monday pageant, which was to be the last production of this popular local festivity.

Thus we have seen how the church was restored to the Catholic faith—the altars set up again, the vestments and church furniture replaced, though on a smaller scale; the roodloft rebuilt and gilded; while Holy Mass and portions of the Divine Office were said once more within its walls. What a number of similar scenes must have taken place all over the country, and how pathetic to think of the short time this restoration of the Catholic worship lasted!

On November 17, 1558, Queen Mary died and Elizabeth at once succeeded. Accordingly the next item in the accounts is that of "ale for the ringers when the Queen's Grace was proclaimed, 8d." And then commences almost immediately a repetition of the vandalism of King Edward's reign. The next entry gives one a shudder: a Catholic might term it *his* description of the Reformation in a nutshell:

Paid for drink for 4 men at taking down the altar stones. . . .

Also:

A Bible, a copy of Erasmus' *Paraphrase*, and a Service Book (*i.e.*, of Common Prayer) were brought this year.

1560. The entries proceed :

Paid for 2 matts, 8 yards of length, for the table, 12d. [presumably the Communion-table].
Paid to the players for their pains (*sic*), 7d.

1561. Now commences the second act of desecration. The poor old church is again deprived of its furniture :

Received for a sale of vestments, 42s. 6d. For banner cloths, 2s. For the Rood-loft, 12s.

Several other things were also then sold :

To the mason for his work on Good Friday and Easter even, 14d.

Instead of attending the beautiful services of Holy Week, the mason was doubtless mutilating all remnants of Catholicity.

For a table for the Commandments and a Kalendar, 16d.
For a frame to the Commandments, 14d.

The "Commandments" were those set up over the communion-table. They were put there on account of the First (Anglican "Second") Commandment, the insinuation being that the "idolatry" of the Mass was now removed from the table underneath.

Various repairs and alterations follow, and "Mr. Mayor's" seat is again renovated. At the same time, apparently, pews were introduced throughout the building. The poor parishioners must have been bewildered by these frequent changes, and it is well known that Catholics vainly cherished the hope of Elizabeth's ultimate conversion, or at least of a Catholic successor to the throne.

For mending the priest's surplice, and the clerk's, 14d.

For a dinner bestowed on the clerks that keep the choir at Christmas, 6s. 8d.

1563. Paid for pulling down the organ chamber, 2s.

For making the Communion-table frame, 3s. 4d.

For a Communion book, 3s.

For the Communion at Easter, 3 quarts of malmsey and 9 quarts of claret wine, 4s. 6d.

Paid to the ringers on Black Monday, at the commandment of master Mayor, 12d. [?]

1564. Received for 29lb. of brass, 6s. [Perhaps the monumental brasses were then taken up and sold.]

For new books for the Leterne [lectern], 1s.

For a book of Homilies, 3s. 4d. Prayers, 8d.

And now, having destroyed the ornaments placed in the church in honour of our Blessed Lord, they apparently proceeded to beautify an earthly lord's temporary dwelling-place. The Earl of Huntingdon here mentioned was, as President of the North, a well-known persecutor of Catholics.

For a day's work about my lord's seat [the earl of Huntingdon], 10d., etc.

For matts for my lord's chapel, 3s. 4d.

For 5 yards of broad green . . . a yard and ¾ of narrow green for my lord's seat, 6s. 2d.

1565. Received. For a cope and two albys [albs], 26s. 10d.

For 4 towels, 9s. For timber of the rood-loft, 12s.

Paid for lime and stone, and working about Mr. Mayor's seat, 8d.

For removing timber out of Mr. Venholde's chapel. . . .

It is noticeable that the chapels, once dedicated to Saints, now become laymen's property—probably as enormous and comfortable pews, conducive to sleep during the lengthy sermons.

1566. Paid Mr. Vicar, for a service-book, 8s.

For four quarts of malmsey at the Communion, 2s.

1567. Received for the organ pipes and the case of all things thereto belonging, £5. Paid for putting out the imageries [images] out of the pulpit, 3s.

To Mr. Brown, Vicar, for certain arrears of tenths and subsidies, as appears by his bill, £5.

Mem. A chalice, weighing 15 ounces and ¼, sold at 5s. 4d. per oz., amounting to £4 4s. 4d.: and bought a communion cup and cover, double gilt, weighing 21½ ounces at 6s. per oz., £6 9s.

Another terse incident showing whether the new service of Holy Communion was the Holy Mass or not. The extraordinary amount of wine consumed at the former service points, perhaps, to a large number of communicants. As the law enforced the same under heavy penalties, we cannot be sure that their attendance was voluntary.

1568. In this year there is only one entry of interest, as follows:

For work about the seats where the minister and clerk sit, 20d.

1569. Received of Mr. Norris for the eagle, £4 18s. [viz., the brass lectern used for the Divine Office.]

1570. Paid for carrying the stones and rammel away where the cross stood, 8d. A stone of the cross, lead, and iron of the same. . . .

This was probably the churchyard crucifix.

A measure was this year passed by the Mayor and Aldermen regulating the charges for having the great bell tolled at funerals, according to the social position of the deceased; also another, enforcing fines upon those who refused upon their election to act as churchwardens.

1571. Paid for taking down things over the font, 12d.

Paid for taking down the petyshons [partitions] about the chancel, 20d.

Paid for cutting down the images heads in the church, 20d.

Paid for cutting down a board over the font, 14d.

Paid for taking down the angels' wings. . . .

These were probably on the roof, as may be seen in churches in the eastern counties.

1573. For cutting the pillar next Mr. Mayor's seat, 16d.

Mention is here made of some payment due to the Queen's Majesty, being part of a legacy left towards "maintaining the preaching of the Gospel of Christ."

1575. Paid for an hour-glass, 4d.

This was used to time the dreary and lengthy sermons of those days. And now it was Mrs. Mayoress's turn:

For five yards of green seys for Mrs. Mayoress's seat, 7s. 6d.; for trimming the same, 1s. 3d.

1589. For a book called the *New Catechism*, 16d.

1591. The Sacrament used to be received monthly [as appears from the years 1591 and 1592], and so successively till this present [*i.e.*, till about 1811, when Nichols wrote].

1593. Paid for two mats for the forms at the communion table, 8d.; and for seven mats for the new seats, 20d.

1593. For washing, painting, and gilding the Queen's arms, £5 11s. 8d.

And yet again:

For serge to trim Mr. Mayor's seat and Mr. Clark's seat, 5s. 4d. For a red skin, 10d. For 19 hundred garnishing nails, 12d. (!)

1595. Received seven books that were chained in the church, and given by Simon Crafts. Paid for binding the seven books, 5s. Paid for a Prayer-book to John Walker, for the Queene, 8d.

1596. A levy was made this year for the communion plate, &c.

1597. Here begins, and continues in the following years, an account of the particular receipts and payments at the Communions, and it was received 17 times this year. The receipts were between 1s. 2d. and 6s. The charge of bread and wine between 1s. 10d. and 7s.

1598. Paid for painting the Communion-place and church, 80 yards, 26s. 8d.

For ledging the seats in the Communion-place, 2s.

The Acts and Monuments, or Book of Martyrs, given by Mr. Barsey. [This was Foxe's untruthful compilation.]

1599. Received for the burial of Mrs. Renouls in the chapel called Mr. Renouls' chapel, 10s.

1600. This year the overseers for collecting for the poor, being four, are named, and so the following years, according to the Statute.

1601. Mr. Holmes, April 13, had what was gathered at Communion after the bread and wine was paid for. Wine was now at 14d. the quart, and used at Communions from two to eight quarts.

Mr. Mayor's seat new trimmed. [A periodical event!]

1602. It is agreed, that whoever refuses to be church-warden shall pay for his fine 20s.

Paid for mending of Sir Edward's and my Lady's seat, several sums. [This was Sir Edward Hastings of the Abbey Gate, who doubtless had obtained the Abbey lands.]

Paid to Mr. Holmes (the minister) for keeping the Register-book for a year and three quarters, 5s. 10d.

This year Queen Elizabeth died, and by this time the Church of England, "the Protestant

Reformed Religion established by law," was fairly started on its future course. The above "items" speak for themselves as to the manner of its starting and show how the old Catholic Church of St. Martin's, Leicester, was turned into a bare and cold Protestant place of worship. From the mention of the forms round the Communion Table, *e.g.* in 1593, it is plain that here as was usual among the new Protestant sects and as was widely prevalent in England, the communicants sat upon these forms, and so received the Communion, passing the bread and wine round to each other, while from the use of the term "Communion-place," and from subsequent items in the Accounts, we see that the Communion Table was placed in the centre of the church and not upon the elevated site of the High Altar, the square, wooden table being covered with a linen tablecloth, and the officiating minister wearing a black gown. Laud, in the seventeenth century, found both these customs rampant: we may compare the above therefore with the two following entries, &c.

1634. Paid for a sequestration from the Archbishop of Canterbury (Dr. Laud), &c., 6s. 8d.; three journies of the churchwardens to London.

1635. Paid to the apparitor, for summoning us several times to appear at Court (High Commission), about the Communion-place, 18d. Painting King's arms, &c.

Paid Edmund Cradock, for charges, being excommunicated, about buying the surplice, 7s. 8d.

Paid Moses Andrew, &c., for taking away the two rows of seats in the church against the King's coming, 2s. 6d.

There are other entries in these Churchwardens' Accounts of St. Martin's which might be studied with

interest. But those which have been given suffice to set before us a graphic picture of the practical working of the Reformation measures, a picture which it is hard to reconcile with modern theories of continuity.

The Hungarian Confession.

BY THE REV. SYDNEY F. SMITH, S.J.

It is often a puzzle to understand how nations which for a thousand years were so deeply attached to the Catholic Faith could have been brought in the course of about a century to regard the same Faith with an equally deep-rooted aversion. And if the puzzle is to a certain extent solved for us when we perceive that the ideas of the later age about Catholic doctrines and institutions are grotesquely erroneous and calumnious, we are further perplexed to understand how such false ideas could in the first instance have obtained currency. Those who have devoted study to the subject know that downright frauds have played their part, and that not a small part, in producing the evil result—frauds, that is to say, in which the few were the perpetrators and the many the victims.

An example of the kind of frauds which have done duty in this way is the document usually called the Hungarian Confession. It is a fraud directed primarily against the Jesuits, but through them against the Catholic Church herself, which would have to be held responsible for the use of so improper a formulary by a Religious Order within its communion.

In England this spurious document has not been extensively used for controversial purposes. It was

brought forward, however, in 1847, by Dr. Christopher Wordsworth, afterwards Bishop of Lincoln. Dr. Wordsworth, in the second of his *Letters to M. Gondon*, assumed its genuineness as undisputed, citing the authority of Streitwolf and Klener,[1] who had given it a place in their Collection. But finding to his apparent surprise that the *Dublin Review*[2] was not prepared to accept such an argument as final, he endeavoured in another letter to support it by reasons drawn from the German works of Herr Mohnike. To Mohnike we shall have to refer presently, and we may therefore dismiss Dr. Wordsworth, except to say that, misled by his advocacy, subsequent English controversialists have occasionally assumed the genuineness of the so-called Confession.[3]

It is in Germany which (or else Hungary) is probably the country of its origin, that the fraud has

[1] *Libri Symbolici Catholicæ Ecclesiæ* in 1838. These writers were Catholics in some sense, and their Collection counts as a scientific work. In the body of the work they give the Apostles' Creed, the Nicene Creed, the Athanasian Creed, the Canons and Decrees of Trent, the Profession of Faith of Pius IV., and the Catechism of the Council of Trent. As appendices they give five other Professions of Faith which they say are of less authority, but of which the other four are as clearly genuine as they are unobjectionable. Fourth in number among these five is our Hungarian Confession, and the account given of it in the Preface is as follows: "The author is unknown, and its age is not clearly ascertained; but it appears to have been composed in Hungary about the year 1673 by Fathers of the Society of Jesus. This inhuman form, which is so very different from the Tridentine Profession of Faith, was first of all exacted from the Evangelicals in Hungary (whence its name of Hungarian Confession) who were received back into the Catholic Faith, but its use was afterwards extended even to Germany." It is significant that in the second edition of their work, published eight years later (1846), although the passage in the Preface remains unaltered, the authors have silently removed the Confession from the Appendix in which the other four Professions of Faith are still to be read.

[2] July, 1847.

[3] See the *Antidote* for April 29, 1890, and the *Gainsborough Discussion* (1888) in Father Anderdon's *Polemica*.

been chiefly utilized. In particular we may notice that in 1821 Dr. Wald, of the University of Königsburg, having taken for the subject of his Easter Programme, or Closing Address, "Confessions of Faith as employed in the Roman Church," included this Confession in his list, and maintained that there was satisfactory evidence of its having been publicly prescribed in Hungary and used on several occasions in Germany. This statement was at once challenged by the Catholic party, with the result of drawing forth several books and articles, among which were the three best works on the subject, that of Provost Jordansky,[1] of Gran, on the Catholic side, and those of Dr. Mohnike[2] on the side of Dr. Wald.

Dr. Mohnike was a man of scholarly reputation, and there is an appearance, though not the reality, of judicial method about his treatise, which imparts to it a certain persuasiveness. His conclusion is that the Confession is certainly genuine, and that its use on four distinct occasions has been sufficiently demonstrated. These instances are stated by him as follows: (1) In 1750, the Confession was publicly made by two young ladies, daughters of the Hofkammerrath Majus, in the Convent of Escherde, on their reception into the Church by the Jesuit Fathers. (2) In 1725, it was made by a certain matron named Anna Klasin, at Ulm in Bavaria. (3) In 1717, it was taken by Duke Maurice of Saxony-Zeiz, on his reception into the Church, at Tocksan in Hungary.

[1] *De Hæresi abjuranda quid statuat Ecclesia Romana.* Auctore Alexio Jordansky.

[2] *Urkundlichen Geschichte*, in 1822, and *Zur Geschichte des Hungarischen Fluchformular*, in 1823.

(4) In 1674, it was taken at Presburg in Upper Hungary, or in its neighbourhood, by Elias Gressner and others, ex-ministers of the Evangelical religion, who at that time were forced by threats of persecution into unreal conversion. Gressner, it will be seen, is the name attached to the text as cited below.

For an examination into the first three of these cases, and the amusing way in which the evidence breaks down in each of them, the reader may refer to *The Month* for July, 1896. It is enough here to say that in each of them the ultimate argument in which Mohnike and those he cites are driven to take refuge, is that the genuineness of the Confession is conclusively established by its use at Presburg in 1674, and that its use on the subsequent occasions is therefore presumable. We can go, then, at once to the root of the matter by examining into the evidence for its use in 1674.

Let us begin by placing the document before us. There are great variations in its text, as there are wont to be in the texts of spurious documents. The text given here, with the note at the end, is from the book in which it first appeared—Lani's *Captivitas Papistica.*

The Confession of Faith of the new Catholics in Hungary.

I. We believe and confess that, through the singular care of our rulers, spiritual and temporal, solely and entirely by the diligence and assistance bestowed upon us by Messieurs the Jesuit Fathers (*Dominorum Patrum Societatis*), we have been converted from the heretical way and belief to the true Roman Catholic and saving (way). And that we wish, of our own free-will without any compulsion, to confess the same publicly with mouth and tongue before the whole world.

II. We confess that the Roman Pope is the Head of the Church and cannot err.

III. We confess and believe that the Pope is the Vicar of Christ, and has power, according to his pleasure, to forgive and retain sins, to cast down into Hell and to excommunicate.

IV. We confess that every novelty which the Pope has established, whether it be in the Scriptures or out of them, and everything which he commands, is true, divine, and of saving power; and that the laity must receive all such as the word of the living God.

V. We confess that the most holy Pope ought to be honoured with divine honour, and with deeper genuflexions than Christ Himself.

VI. We confess and affirm that the Pope must be listened to by every one and in all matters, as the most holy Father, and that all heretics who resist his orders, without exception and without compassion, should not only by means of the fire be cast out of our midst but should also be thrust down body and soul into Hell.

VII. We confess that the reading of the Scriptures is the origin of all heresies and of all sects, and is also the source of all blasphemies.

VIII. We confess that it is a divine, holy, and useful thing to invocate the dead saints, to honour their pictures, to bow the knee before them, to make pilgrimages to them, to dress them up, to burn lights before them.

IX. We confess that every priest is much greater than the Mother of God herself, since she only gave birth to the Lord Christ once, and does not give birth to Him any more; whereas a Romish priest sacrifices and creates the Lord Christ, not only when he will, but also in whatever way he will; nay, after he has created Him he even devours Him.

X. We confess that it is useful and salutary to read mass for the dead, to give alms for them, and to pray for them.

XI. We confess that the Roman Pope has power to change the Scripture, and, according to his will, to add to it or take from it.

XII. We confess that the souls after death are purified in Purgatory, and that aid towards their redemption is obtained through the masses of the priests.

XIII. We confess that to receive the Lord's Supper under one kind is good and saving, but under both kinds is heretical and damnable.

XIV. We confess and believe that those who receive the Holy Communion under one kind receive and use the whole Christ with His Body and Blood, His Divinity and His Bones, but that those who use both kinds, obtain and eat only plain bread.

XV. We confess that there are seven true and real sacraments.

XVI. We confess that God is honoured through pictures, and that by them He is made known to men.

XVII. We confess that the Holy Virgin Mary ought to be held both by angels and by men to be higher than Christ, the Son of God Himself.

XVIII. We confess that the Holy Virgin Mary is a Queen of Heaven and reigns equally with her Son, who is obliged to do everything according to her will.

XIX. We confess that the bones of the saints have great power in themselves, and that they ought on that account to be honoured by men and have chapels built to them.

XX. We confess that the Roman doctrine is Catholic, pure, divine and saving, ancient and true; but that the Evangelical doctrine (from which we freely depart), is false, erroneous, blasphemous, accursed, heretical, perditious, seditious, impious, spurious, and fictitious. While, therefore, the Roman religion, with its one kind, is wholly and entirely good and holy in all its interpretations, we curse all those who have offered us this opposite and impious heresy with its two kinds. We curse our parents who brought us up in this heretical belief; we curse all those who caused us to doubt or suspect the Roman Catholic belief. So too (we curse) the two who gave us the accursed chalice. Yea, we also curse ourselves and call ourselves accursed, in that we took part in this accursed heretical chalice, which it did not become us to drink out of.

XXI. We confess that the Holy Scripture is imperfect and a dead letter as long as it is not explained to us by the Pope of Rome, but is left to the layman, or common man, to read. We confess that a mass for the dead, said by a Roman priest, is of much more use than a hundred and more Evangelical sermons. And we, therefore, curse all the books which we have read in which this heretical and blasphemous doctrine is contained. We curse also all our works which we did whilst we lived in this heretical doctrine, so that they may not receive from God their deserts at the Last Judgment. All this we do with a right conscience, and by a public act of retractation, in the presence of the Reverend Lord Father, of the honourable gentlemen and the respected matrons, of the youths and maidens, we confirm (our belief) that the Roman Church in these and the like articles, is the truest Church. Moreover, we swear that we will never, as long as our life lasts, return to this heretical doctrine under both kinds, even if it were permitted us or could be done. We swear, also, that as long as there is a spark of life in our bodies, we will persecute this accursed Evangelical doctrine, utterly, secretly, and openly, by violence and deceit, with words and deeds, even the sword not excepted. Lastly, we swear before God, before the Holy Angels, and before you here present, that (even if there should come to pass some change in the authorities of Church or State), we will never, through fear or through favour, decline from this blessed Roman Catholic and Divine Church, nor return to the accursed Evangelical heresy, or take up with the same again.

["The chief leader among these new Catholics was Elias Gressner, principal pastor in the city of Neusohl, who, after he had first of all signed it, was compelled soon after to recite it in the church there, just about the time when we at Presburg were brought up before the court of the high priest and received this news of his apostasy."]

Here is the document, and we are not surprised to hear from Mohnike, that when he showed it to a Catholic friend, the friend's reply was, "If that is

Christianity, I turn to the heathen." What then are the evidences for its use which have satisfied minds by no means deficient in character and learning, though filled with prejudice against the Catholic Church?[1]

In the year 1676 there appeared at Leipsic a book bearing the following title:

In the name of the crucified Jesus, who powerfully protects, mightily consoles, and gloriously delivers His captives, A short and truthful History of the horrible and almost unparalleled captivity under the Papists, as also of the marvellous Delivery from the same, of Magister George Lani, Hungarian, School Rector in the distinguished town of Karpfen, in Hungary, who remained true to his God and the Evangelical Church. This man, purely and solely because he would not fall away from Evangelical Truth, nor sign the shameful Reversal Letters, was, although blameless, summoned to Presburg in 1674, and condemned from life to death.

Such then is the book which, for brevity's sake, is usually called the *Captivitas Papistica*. As indicated in the above descriptive title, a large body of Lutheran and Calvinist ministers were summoned before a Court Delegate of the Empire, held at Presburg, over which Archbishop Szelepczenyí of Gran, as Stadtholder of Hungary, presided. But the charge against these preachers was not, as Lani says, a charge of heresy, but of treason.[2] There had been a conspiracy forming for some years previously in Hungary, of which several

[1] For what follows, I am much indebted to Father Bernhard Duhr, S.J., who, in his *Jesuiten-fabeln*, published by Herder (No. 7, pp. 141—166), has given an excellent account of the history of the Hungarian Confession, as well as of other famous charges against the Society of Jesus.

[2] See the account in Von Mailath's *History of the Austrian Empire*.

powerful Hungarian noblemen were the leading spirits. Its object was to drive the Germans out of Hungary, and, for the purpose of strengthening themselves, the conspirators had entered into negotiations with the Turks on the one side, and with the French on the other. These heads of the conspiracy were Catholic, but the charge brought against the preachers was that they had entered into an alliance with them, and were seeking to stir up their adherents by an organized system of inflammatory sermons. The object these preachers had in view (so it was alleged), was to exact a restoration of certain funds which the Racoczky princes used to allow them as long as they were themselves Lutherans, but which on their secession to the Catholic Church they had withdrawn. The conspiracy being discovered, its leaders were tried, and mostly executed. The ministers who stood for their trial were likewise convicted of the offence charged, and condemned to death. The death sentence was, however, remitted to all of them save one or two. The others were offered the alternative of signing Reversal letters, as they were technically called, or of being sent to the galleys. These Reversal letters were letters by which they, the signatories, acknowledged to their conviction (it was disputed whether an acknowledgment of guilt was involved), and were of two kinds—one for those who desired to remain in the country, another for those who preferred banishment. Those who elected to remain undertook by their Reversals to abstain in future from all ministerial work as Lutheran or Calvinist preachers, and to live henceforth peaceably as private citizens. Those who elected for banishment undertook by their

signatures to leave the kingdom within a stated period. Most of the persons convicted chose to sign these Reversals, and were treated accordingly. Some, on the other hand, refusing to sign, were sent after an interval to the Neapolitan galleys. These numbered seventeen, whose names are preserved, and Lani was one of them.

The text of these Reversal letters is given by Lani, and also in two other writings of the time, the *Animadversiones* of an anonymous author, who had himself apparently signed them, and the *Brevis Extractus*, which is an account of the whole affair written by Lapsansky, the secretary to the Court Delegate. Further reference will be made to these two other documents presently, but meanwhile it is important to observe that, though the text of the Reversals differs somewhat in the three sources, in none of them is there any clause requiring or implying a surrender of the religious opinions of the signatories.

Nevertheless, Lani, who did not sign, and was sent to the galleys, maintains in his *Captivitas Papistica* that religion was the real crime for which they were punished. He speaks therefore of himself and his fellows, and of himself particularly, as martyrs, but of those who signed the Reversals as apostates; and he states that shortly after the latter had signed the Reversals, the (Hungarian) Confession was offered them, and they were required to sign that as well. Here it is important we should have before us his exact words, which are as follows: "When those who remained in the country had signed these Reversals, they were very soon after in many places forced into apostasy. The Jesuits then prescribed to them

the following Confession of Faith, and they were compelled to read it out *publicly before the whole people*." Then he gives the form already transcribed from his pages under the heading, "Confession of Faith of the new Catholics in Hungary." At the end of this form in Lani's first Latin edition of 1676, it is stated, as we have seen, that the Profession was made by Elias Gressner, chief pastor of Neusohl, but no other name is mentioned. It is noticeable, too, that although in this manner Lani gives the text of the alleged Confession and testifies to its having been taken by these new Catholics, he troubles himself otherwise very little about it. The staple of his book is occupied with his own history and sufferings, and his own heroism as compared with the sinful cowardice of his former colleagues.

It will be asked how Lani could have managed to publish the *Captivitas Papistica*. The answer is, that after having served with the rest in the Neapolitan galleys for about a year, he contrived to escape, and then after an interval returned, not indeed to Hungary, but to Germany. It was thus at Leipsic, not at Presburg, that he caused his book to be printed.

Its contentions did not remain long unchallenged. A Jesuit Father, George Heidelberger, according to Lani himself, wrote an Anti-Lanius, but I have not been able to find it or to learn more about its contents than its title implies. The name of Heidelberger is not found in De Backer's *Bibliographie*, and he was presumably therefore not a Jesuit. A more important publication was the *Brevis Extractus*, above mentioned as having been written by Lapsansky, the Secretary

of the Court Delegate which tried the prisoners. This document, in the temperance of its language and the lucid simplicity of its narrative, contrasts favourably with Lani's involved story and inflated style. Lapsansky does not refer to Lani's allegation about the new Catholics, perhaps because its absurdity was too patent in a region where the facts were known. The purpose he keeps in view is to prove that Lani is untruthful in contending that it was their religious beliefs which had brought the preachers into trouble. He gives an outline account of the conspiracy in which they had been implicated and of the evidence by which they were convicted. On this point he gives the text of two letters written by a minister named Wittnyedi: one to Kelzer, the Governor of Eperies; the other to Nicolas, Count of Bethlen, one of the rebel leaders. If these letters are authentic, they convict the prisoners beyond a shadow of doubt, and Lapsansky tells us the originals were produced in court, and the handwriting was recognized by the prisoners themselves. There was also confirmatory evidence of their guilt in the agreement between the contents of the letters and the after-events: for, after an engagement between the rebels and the Imperial troops in which the former were defeated, the bodies of several preachers were found among the bodies of the slain rebels. Lapsansky ends by saying that it is mere wantonness and calumny for the condemned persons to say that they were suffering for their religion, and he asks them whether they had ever been disturbed in their religious assemblies previously to the rebellion, or whether those of their co-religionists who had taken

no part in the rebellion were not still enjoying a full liberty of worship. It may be added that, as Von Mailath the historian mentions, the Kaiser wrote to the King of Sweden, who had interceded for these preachers, vehemently protesting that they had been punished only for treason and in no way for religion. This point is of importance, because it convicts Lani, the sole authority for the alleged use of the Hungarian Confession, of having given an untruthful account of the circumstances of his conviction.

The *Brevis Extractus* appeared in the same year as the *Captivitas Papistica*, 1676, and was at once answered, probably by Lani himself, in the *Funda Davidis*. We need not concern ourselves more with this latter work except to say that it repeats the charge against the New Catholics of having recited the Confession we are considering, but names, besides Elias Gressner, Simon Fridvalsky as having been among the guilty parties.

So far then we are reduced to the testimony of a single witness, George Lani, for evidence of the use of the Hungarian Confession by Catholics, and probably what has been already said will be deemed sufficient to divest this one witness of all claims to be believed. We have, however, a witness on the other side who came forward most opportunely to provide us with a fuller insight into the character of this Lani, and the credibility of his allegations.

The ministers who signed the Reversals, we may be quite sure, did not appreciate the description which Lani had given of them, and one of their number was moved to take up his pen to protest. He does not give his name, but it was clearly well

known to Lani, whose rejoinder will be referred to presently, and he appears to have been one of those who signed the Reversals for the ministers electing to go into exile. It is clear, too, that he at least had not bought his liberty by any change of religion. He is a Protestant still, and writes from a Protestant standpoint. His treatise has already been mentioned, and is entitled: *Animadversiones Theologico-politico-historico-criticæ in narrationem Georgii Lani.* This treatise is very severe on Lani for calling his fellow-ministers who signed the Reversals, Pseudo-Evangelicals, inconstant, and unscrupulous men. It goes through the *Captivitas Papistica* paragraph by paragraph, making comments upon each portion, and gives a very different account of Lani from his own. It calls him a great bragger and exaggerator, and suggests that he is also a liar. It says that the literary attainments of which Lani boasts were of no great merit, that he was not a professor as he tries to make out, but a mere common schoolmaster, and that if he gave out that he had previously held a professorship elsewhere, which he had vacated in order to take charge of the boys' school at Karpfen, he gave out what no one had ever thought of believing. The *Animadversiones* also calls him a coward, and ridicules a story in the *Captivitas Papistica*, in which Lani claims, by his courageous interposition, to have rescued some young Protestants out of the hands of a band of soldiers. It says he had nothing to do with their rescue, and that, whereas he boasts of his presence of mind when a drawn sword was pointed at his breast, it was not his breast but another's at which the sword was pointed.

It further accuses him of having given a false account of the nature of the Reversals which those who accepted them had signed.

Coming to the question of the Confession, this treatise says to Lani:

> I should have recommended you not to eke out your sections with such uncertain and doubtful stories; especially as they are circulated without the attestation of any certain author. For although the Jesuits may have used (*usurparint*) this Confession elsewhere, and have prescribed it to their new Catholics, how can you say that it was used by the new Catholics in the Kingdom of Hungary? Your answer will be, "I find it in writing." What a ridiculous answer! Why, you are as bad as that Mass-priest who thought that whatever was in manuscript only was false, but that all printed matter, however mendacious, must be true. Anyhow, it is not all printed matter which is true, for in your own narrative there is a great deal which is false and destitute of all foundation. Be off to the author from whom you got this Confession, and stay with him for a while till you have learnt better things. Then perhaps you will come back a wise man.

Later on, in his *Animadversiones*, this writer returns to the Confession. It is in an Appendix, where, having finished with Lani's *Captivitas Papistica*, he passes on to his *Funda Davidis*. Perhaps the full title will be of interest: "The Slinger of the Sling of David—not David, the holy Psalmist, but David, the self-styled constant man—is told of his lies, his inconsistencies, his paradoxes, and such like." Then the writer commences thus: "Lying is base and ignominious in all, but specially in one to whom one looks for the truth. But David, not considering this, is not afraid to lie without a blush on his forehead. I will give you some specimens." Among these are:

4. In his 68th section, he (Lani) states that the Confession for new Catholics was publicly given to the ministers to be recited by them. To what ministers was it given, at what time, and in what place, and in whose hearing? As for what you say about Gressner, that is your make up.

5. In the same section you mention Simon Fridvalsky, of Deutsch-Leibau, as a new Catholic who blasphemed against the worshippers of the true God. Who (I should like to know) saw him, or heard him do so? He (Lani) does not blush to lie thus, in the face of Christendom, about one who up to this hour is continuing in his Evangelical faith in the village close to Deutsch-Leibau. Out on him for such a lie.

These *Animadversiones* naturally irritated Lani and his friends, who were not long in returning to the fray. Their rejoinder is entitled *Clypeus Veritatis seu Vindiciæ Narrationis Historicæ Captivitatis Papisticæ.*[1] The title-page claims the authorship for two disciples of Lani, George Gassitius and Christopher Mazarius, but it is generally assumed that under these names the personality of Lani himself lies concealed. How far this assumption, which is that of Protestant quite as much as of Catholic writers—for instance of Mohnike—is justified, I cannot say. I can only observe that if it is, Lani was not one of those who have scruples about self-praise, for the book describes him as "a man worthy of all admiration for his patience under such various misfortunes," as "one who had deserved well of the persecuted Church," as "one whose writings were characterized by a striking modesty of style," and so on. The authorship, however, of the *Clypeus Veritatis*, whether it be from Lani's own pen or from

[1] P. 30. The *Captivitas Papistica* with the *Funda Davidis*, the *Brevis Extractus*, the *Animadversiones*, and the *Clypeus Veritatis*, are all in the British Museum Library.

that of his disciples, is evidently from him in the sense that it gives his answer to the *Animadversiones.* What, then, has he to say to the charge brought against him by the *Animadversiones* of having fabricated out of his own head the story of Gressner's and Fridvalsky's use of the Confession, as well as of the general statement that the Catholics prescribed it to their converts in Hungary, whereas there was no evidence of its use by them in Hungary or elsewhere, save the mere fact that some one or other who had not given his name had printed it in a book? To this question the *Clypeus Veritatis* has no other reply save the following:

> 1. Cease to prostitute your affections on the Roman harlot, and out of mere hatred of the author (*i.e.* Lani) to call in doubt a matter most certain which is confirmed by excellent witnesses, and which even the Loyolitæ do not deny. [He does not, however, name any of his excellent witnesses, and we may have our doubts as to whether the Jesuits admitted or not the truth of the charge.]
>
> 2. The form alleged by the author to have been thus used will not seem so uncertain and doubtful to those who are well acquainted with the impudence of (the Jesuits), as evinced by the Confessions they obtruded on our people, as you yourself bear witness, in Bohemia, Moravia, and other provinces.

The writer of the *Animadversiones* had not given any testimony to the use of the Confession in Bohemia, Moravia, and other provinces, and we are thus granted another insight into the accuracy of statement practised by Lani and his friends. What the author of the *Animadversiones* did say was that the Confession was not in use in Hungary, but might perhaps have been used by the Jesuits in other places,

although the only sort of evidence to prove it was the bare fact of the Confession appearing in a printed book without an author's name.

3. Show the contrary if you do not believe what has been said [by Lani—that is, prove the negative].

We have now before us all the materials necessary to estimate the value of Lani's allegations. It is clear—

1. That in stating that the Confession was used by Gressner, Fridvalsky, or any others in the neighbourhood of Presburg, at the time of his own trial, he was merely telling a falsehood.

2. That the text of the Confession was in print in some unknown book by an anonymous author, and that this was considered sufficient proof of its use in other parts.

3. That Lani's party professed to believe that among these other parts were Bohemia and Moravia, but that they could bring forward no evidence for their theory.

Hence the Confession at least loses all title to be called Hungarian. There is not an atom of proof that it was ever used in that country.

We may, then, leave Lani, although before doing so it will be of interest to mention that among the seventeen ministers sent to the Neapolitan galleys, of whom Lani was one, another was Francis Foris Ottrococksy. Ottrococksy served out his punishment in the galleys, or rather the small portion of it which was not remitted, and then remained for some time in Italy and went to Rome. There he had an opportunity of studying the working of the Catholic religion,

and the effect of what he saw was to convert him. He wrote a book, *Roma Civitas Dei*, which is unfortunately not in the British Museum Library. Dr. Woodruff's answer to it is, however, there, and contains extracts from which one can gather the spirit and the beliefs of the writer. It is hardly necessary to say they correspond with what we know to be the Catholic religion, not with the perverted notions of the *Confessio Novorum Catholicorum.* Ottrococksy went back in due time to his own country, where he laboured in the priesthood, and died piously at Tyrnau.

Perhaps enough has been said on the subject of the Confession. Still, as Lani, or his disciples, have alleged an earlier use of it by Catholics at all events in Moravia, Bohemia, and elsewhere, and Mohnike claims to have supplied authentic evidence of this, not indeed in Bohemia or Moravia, but in Lower Silesia, a district bordering on Bohemia, it will be well to hear what he has to say.

Mohnike, in his *Fluchformular*,[1] tells us that he had for long suspected that the origins of the Confession were to be sought in an earlier period, but that he had recently come into possession of evidence which converted this suspicion into certainty. Through the kindness of a certain Dr. Superintendent Worbs of Priebus, in Silesia, he had obtained a certified copy of an extract from the Sixth Supplement of the Annals of Glogau, in Lower Silesia. The author of these Annals was John Samuel Tschirschnitz, who wrote in 1790, at which time he was Syndic of Glogau. The extract runs thus :

[1] P. 140.

From the Acts of the Evangelical Church of Glogau, the following entry was communicated to me, Syndic Tschirschnitz, by Herr Pastor Posselt in 1791.

Then follows:

Confession-ticket and Oath to which the citizens of Glogau and Grünberg (probably about 1628) were compelled to subscribe:

I, a poor sinner, confess to you, Herr Pater, in the place of God, and of the Holy Virgin Mary, and of the dear Saints, that I for so long and so many years (NB. as it may approximately be) held the accursed, damnable, impious, and heretical doctrine, which is called Lutheran, was living in horrible error, and went to their abominable sacrament, at which time I received nothing else than baked bread and bad (*schlechten*) wine out of a vessel. All such wicked errors and damnable doctrines I renounce and promise never again to embrace. So help me God and the Saints.

Articles to which the Lutherans had to swear.

I. We believe all that the Christian Catholic Church enjoins, whether it is in Holy Scripture or not.

II. We believe in the intercession and invocation of Saints.

III. We believe that there is a Purgatory.

IV. We believe in Seven Sacraments.

V. We believe that the Virgin Mary is worthy of greater honour and praise than the Son of God.

VI. We believe that the Lutheran Church is false.

VII. We believe that the chalice ought not to be used any longer.

VIII. We believe that it is through the intercession of the Saints that we accursed Lutherans have been brought to the true knowledge of the Christian Catholic Church.

Here is the extract from Tschirschnitz in its entirety, and it is interesting to see how faithfully it reproduces the characteristic lineaments of the

anti-Catholic myth. We get a very obtrusively certified attestation from Dr. Worbs in 1823, to prove what Herr Posselt said to Herr Tschirschnitz in 1790 about something alleged to have happened some one hundred and sixty years earlier ; but we get nothing solid to attest the credibility of Herr Posselt's statement. We are left quite in the dark as to the credibility of these *Acta* of the Evangelical Church of Glogau. The one thing we do perceive about them is that they must have been drawn up in a very unscientific manner.

No date is assigned to the entry about the Confession tickets, which for aught we are told may have been made at any time between the date of the alleged occurrence and 1790. No indication is given of the source from which the ticket was obtained by the unknown person who made the entry, nor does the ticket seem to have borne the name or the signature of the person who received it. One would like also to have been told something of the circumstances under which the tickets were given, the more so as there is no certainty about the date of their use. We are only told, by Herr Posselt in 1790, that it was somewhere about 1628. And lastly, it requires explanation that these *Acta* of the Evangelical Church, though extant in 1790, and recognized as containing such important evidence, were not forthcoming in 1823 to confirm the testimony of Tschirschnitz.

Here, however, Dr. Worbs comes forward to relieve our anxiety, if not with original documents, at least with a bold conjecture. Soon after the close of the Thirty Years' War, he tells us, on the authority of the *Loci Communes of the Silesian Gravamina*, another

work of which he forgets to state the nature, age, and authorship, the terrible Count von Dohna was sent into Silesia, and among other places to Glogau, to force the Lutherans into apostasy. Then, say the *Loci Communes:*

> Many out of fear, anxiety, or fright, many in folly and ignorance, many too in sheer levity of spirit, applied to Herr von Dohna, who offered to each of them Confession-tickets (*Beichtszettel*) to sign, which if presented would cause any soldiers, who might be quartered upon him, to leave his house and pass on to that of some one without a ticket. And, the city being very populous, what with the unforeseen haste required, and the terrible character of the tortures threatened, the number of these applicants was so great that they struggled and pressed against one another, and the many priests who sat by the side were insufficient to write out for them, or von Dohna to sign, the tickets.

What is usually understood by a Confession-ticket is a card certifying that the holder has been to confession, but Dr. Worbs, though without giving his reasons, assumes that the Confession-tickets used at Glogau on this occasion were abridged Professions of Faith, and that the Confession-ticket whose text was furnished by Tschirschnitz was one of them. And he further assumes, though again without giving his reasons, that the real Profession of Faith pronounced by these enforced converts was the Hungarian Confession, but that the tickets abridged it into the above shorter form, because, the multitude of applicants being so large, it was impossible for the secretaries to write out so many copies of the longer form. In this dexterous way Dr. Worbs satisfies himself that he has discovered the earliest use of the Hungarian Confession. Nor is he disturbed by the

reflection that even this shorter form may have proved too long to be thus repeatedly transcribed by the hurried secretaries.

It is unfortunate, however, for his theory that the Count von Mailath gives a radically different account of what happened at Glogau on the occasion of von Dohna's visit, an account which reads much more favourably for the Catholics, and has likewise the advantage of assigning to the term "Confession-ticket" its usual meaning.

The Count tells us that the object of von Dohna's visit was to recover for the Catholics the ancient Church of St. Nicholas, which the Lutherans had forcibly taken away from them and refused to surrender. According to the practice then universal, he proceeded to quarter his soldiers upon the inhabitants, and it was natural that he should quarter them on the aggressors who had necessitated his visit, rather than on their Catholic victims. He seems to have accepted "Confession-tickets" as a test by which to identify the Catholics, but many of the Lutherans also, pocketing such convictions as they had, contrived to obtain these tickets for themselves, and so evade the threatened calamity. It is in this sense only that they can be said to have been persecuted into apostasy.

We have now traced the history of this strange document as far as we have any records to lead us, and we have discovered, what we might have expected, that from first to last it can find no solid ground on which to establish itself. In every instance the witnesses who testify to its use are Protestant, not Catholic witnesses, and in every case their testimony hopelessly breaks down. If, too, we cared to

bestow more time on the subject, we might appeal to the intrinsic evidences which lie on the face of the document, for it betrays its Protestant authorship by using modes of expression which accord with Protestant usage, and not with Catholic usage. No Catholic would in a formal document speak of "Roman Catholic doctrine," or of a "Roman priest," or a "Roman Pope." No Catholic would call the Lutheran religion by such a name as "Evangelical." And, as the Jesuits are said to have drawn up the form, we may note that such a phrase as *Domini Patres Jesuitæ* ("*Herrn* Vater Jesuiten") is just the kind of phrase which Jesuits would avoid. All these phrases, on the other hand, are customary among Protestants.

The Confession then is of Protestant origin, but in what sense? Of course it is conceivable that from the first it was a deliberate forgery—that is to say, a form drawn up by some malignant person with the deliberate intention of passing it off seriously as a form which Catholics did not shrink from using. Still it seems more probable that in the first instance it was intended as a satirical composition, like the *Letter of the Three Bishops* over which Mr. Collette has made himself so foolish.[1] Where fraud came in, if this hypothesis is correct, was in the subsequent stages. Preachers and writers who either knew or should have suspected the truth, persuaded themselves that the document was of genuine Catholic origin, and then mendaciously ascribed it to particular persons on particular occasions, well knowing that they had not a shred of evidence for their charges.

[1] See *Mr. Collette as a Controversialist*. By F. W. Lewis. London: Catholic Truth Society. One Penny.

A MARTYR TO SILENCE.

We have all heard of the holy Saint of Prague, St. John Nepomucen, who suffered torture and death rather than reveal the confession of the Queen to her husband, King Wenceslaus, whose unfounded jealousy had been the cause of the crime. But the Catholic Church is the same to-day as it was in the fourteenth century, and her priests are as ready now as then to lay down their lives rather than betray the secrets of the confessional.

The following touching and interesting narrative will abundantly prove my assertion :—

There is in the Government of Kieff, in Russia, in the diocese of Zytomir, a small town called Oratoff. It is close to the frontier of the Government of Volhynia, of which Ictomir is the chief city. The country is remarkable for its great forests of oak, birch and lime; communications are difficult and roads are scarce, mainly owing to the immense marshes or bogs which cover a great portion of the country, and extend towards the north to the Government of Minsk. The cold in winter is extreme, and there being no mountains or hills to break the flat plains on every side, nothing can well be more sad, dreary and monotonous than the scenery.

In this little village, or rather small town, of Oratoff

was once stationed a very holy Catholic priest, Father Kobylowicz. His was indeed a life full of sacrifices and privations, surrounded as he was by a schismatic population; for the lower orders in Russia are almost all of the Russian Greek Church, and, moreover, steeped in the grossest ignorance and superstition. His congregation consisted of a few Polish families scattered here and there, and of the *employés* of the noblemen living in the district. Still he did not complain of his sad and isolated position, but faithfully served his little flock, spending the rest of his time in close communication with God.

Nothing occurred to break this monotonous existence till 1859, when the news of a terrible murder ran through the town. It had been accomplished with great secrecy; but being of a person of importance, the authorities were determined to leave no stone unturned to discover the culprit. About the same time, to the surprise of the little Catholic congregation, Father Kobylowicz dismissed his organist, a man who had been more or less trained by himself—for the priest was a great musician. No reason was assigned for his departure; but the Father seemed sadder and graver than usual, and avoided all conversation on the subject.

A few weeks passed, when one day, to the horror and consternation of everybody in the place, this very organist came forward and denounced Father Kobylowicz to the authorities, as the murderer of whom they were in search. Circumstantial evidence was adduced which staggered even the Father's best friends.

The gentleman had been shot dead; and a gun loaded

with a like charge was found concealed in the sacristy, and undoubtedly belonged to the priest. He himself, under the burden of this fearful accusation, remained perfectly silent; and on being at last indignantly asked what he had to say in his defence, replied simply:—

"I am innocent before God and man."

Those who knew his holy and irreproachable life were ready enough to believe him on his own word. But, alas! proofs were utterly wanting, and he was sent to prison to prepare for a further and more important trial.

And now there fell upon this servant of God that which must have been the hardest thing of all to bear,—the mistrust of his own superiors. To suffer from the bad, from persons already prejudiced against you by an alien faith, is endurable; but to be condemned by the good, to be misunderstood by those placed in authority over you, and delivered over by them to your enemies—this is indeed the last drop in the bitter cup! Yet, strange to say, God permitted this; and the judgment of his own Bishop was so completely blinded that even he believed him guilty, all the more from what he termed his "obstinate silence" as to every fact connected with the murder.

How bitterly must Mgr. Borowski now repent of the decision which gave his faithful priest over to the secular arm, and what was worse, to the tender mercies of a Russian judge!

The trial was merely a nominal one. He was at once declared guilty, and condemned to hard labour for life in the mines of Siberia. His demeanour during the

trial,* however, was so dignified and so calm that even the judge was struck by it; contrasting it with the feverish agitation of the organist, who never dared meet the eye of the priest. When sentence was pronounced, Father Kobylowicz lifted his eyes to heaven, and said simply:—

"God's holy will be done!"

The cruel sentence was carried out in its entirety. Chained to a malefactor, and treated as a criminal of the worst type, he was marched in mid-winter to the place of his exile. The terrible sufferings of the prisoners on such occasions and the barbarity of their guards have been too often described to make it necessary to repeat them here.

We have no record of this awful journey. Doubtless his faith and patience raised the courage of his companions, and to many he may have been the one means decreed by God for their salvation. Many, likewise, in that band of so-called convicts must have been the innocent victims of supposed political conspiracy; and to one and all he must have been as an angel of hope and consolation. But till the day when all things shall be revealed, the agonies of mind and body borne by this faithful follower of Our Divine Lord will never be known to us, nor his ministrations for good in that doleful land of suffering, exile, and often unmerited punishment.

Twenty years passed. The priest had been tried in 1859, and it was now 1879, when a fearful scene was witnessed in a house in Oratoff. It was a death-bed—

* An eye-witness during the trial exclaimed after: "I seemed to see Our Lord's representative. *Jesus autem tacebat.*"

a man dying of a horrible disease, but suffering still greater mental tortures. His one cry was for the magistrates to be sent for, as he wished to make a formal deposition before he died.

The authorities came, moved partly by curiosity, partly by pity for the dying man. It was the organist; and he then confessed that he himself had been the murderer of the gentleman, of whose homicide he had accused the priest; that he had stolen the Father's gun and concealed it in the sacristy after the crime was committed, in order to throw suspicion upon him. That his motive had been an impure love for the wife of his victim, whom he had subsequently married. That fearing his conduct might lead to suspicion and inquiry, he had determined to accuse Father Kobylowicz himself of the murder; and that to ensure his secrecy, he had diabolically determined to go to him in confession and reveal his crime, knowing full well that the priest's lips would then be for ever tied, and that he would be unable to clear himself even before his superiors. That he carried out this truly infernal scheme to the letter; that the result had been exactly what he foresaw; and that Father Kobylowicz had preferred a horribly slow torture, even unto death, to breaking his sacramental secrecy. He added, that never from the hour of the trial had he known one moment's peace; that the partner of his guilt had died soon after, raving mad; that everything had failed which he had tried; and that now he was dying the death of Herod, and would make but this one act of solemn reparation for the double crime of which he had been guilty.

The wretched man's repentance was sincere, and he died soon after, reconciled to God—a death which all felt had been obtained by the continual prayers and sufferings offered up for him by his saint-like victim in Siberia.

Every circumstance attending this judicial confession was made known to the Government, who instantly sent orders for Father Kobylowicz's recall from Siberia, and also hastened to clear his character in the eyes of his diocesan.

But strange indeed are the dispensations of God! The very day that the order for his release reached the Governor at Tobolsk, Father Kobylowicz had died—a martyr to his sacramental secrecy—without the consolation of knowing either of the repentance of his accuser or of the clearing of his fair fame in the eyes of men. As his Master had died with malefactors on the Cross, so was he to die, and only in heaven to obtain his glorious reward.

Is he not another protector for the poor Russians? another interpreter for them before the Throne of God? And may we not hope that such fearful sufferings so nobly borne, and for such a cause, will draw down from the mercy of God some great and special blessings for his countrymen and companions in exile?

THE TWO COUSINS.

One day in July, about twelve years ago, two little children were playing in a court in one of the most crowded parts of London. Happy are the children who have green fields and shady lanes and wild flowers and all the beautiful sights and sounds of country life, to make their childhood bright and pleasant! But the poor little things who are cooped up in close courts and alleys hardly know what a bit of green is, or a bird, save one in a cage; they have nothing but dirty pavement to run about on, no relief from the burning sun in summer-time, and nothing to play with but old oyster-shells or filthy toys. What wonder then that they so often grow up as puny and stunted as their surroundings?

This was not the case, however, with the two children whose story I am going to tell. One was an orphan—her name was Lucy. Her father and mother were both dead, and she had been taken care of, ever since she could remember, by an uncle and aunt, who had many children of their own, and could badly afford to keep an extra mouth. But they said: "We can't have poor Mary's child sent to the workhouse," and so they kept her, with that wonderful charity which you see so often among the poor, and so rarely, alas! among

those of a higher class, by whom the "poor relation" is often scouted and abandoned—or even if admitted into their home, is made to eat the bitter bread of dependence and to feel that she is a nuisance and a burden.

At the time our story begins, Lucy was four years old, while her little cousin Mary was just five; and as they lived next door, they were constant playmates and companions. Mary's mother was a widow, who worked hard for a living; she was a good and fervent Catholic, and brought up her child to be one too. As soon as she could speak, she taught her to say the words "Jesus" and "Mary," and to fold her little hands in prayer; and on Sundays she would carry her in her arms to the nearest Catholic church, where, if she did not understand what was going on, she yet learned that reverence and that happy familiarity (if we may so call it) with Our Dear Lord and His Mother which are so beautiful in a little Catholic child, to whom "church" is not a place of weary penance and dread, as it sometimes is to those not of the Faith, but a home, where the pictures and the statues of the Holy Mother and her Child are as old friends, associated with the earliest and happiest recollections.

The baby years of these two children had thus been passed, when an event occurred which changed their whole future lives.

I have said that Mary's mother and Lucy's uncle and aunt were poor hard-working people; they were out at work all day long, and had to leave their little ones either to the care of one of the elder children or to an old woman who lived in the court, and made a few half-

pence by "minding" the babies of her neighbours during the work-hours. This old woman was tolerably good and respectable on the whole, but there were times when she was tempted to take more drink than was good for her; she would then often fall asleep, leaving her little charges to take care of themselves. Mary's mother was sometimes alarmed at this, but what could she do? If she did not go out to work, neither she nor Mary would have anything to eat; so that she tried to stifle her anxiety with the thought that Mary would soon be old enough to go to school, and then she would be safe during the work-hours.

One day, when every grown-up man and woman in the court was gone to work and the bigger children were all at school, our little cousins were playing together, building an oyster-shell house, when a man and woman whom they did not know came into the court, bringing a monkey and an organ with them. The children were delighted; all the more when, after a whispered conversation with the woman, the man began playing a tune and the monkey to dance. The woman took some sweet-stuff out of her pocket which she offered to Mary, and then said to her:—

"If you will come just outside into the street there, I'll show you a beautiful parrot too."

Now Mary's mother had always strictly charged her never to go beyond the court, nor to let Lucy do so. But the temptation was too strong to be resisted. The old woman had dozed away in her armchair by the door, and even the music did not wake her; for, alas! she had yielded to her besetting sin that day; and so,

without even thinking of her mother's warning, Mary holding little Lucy by the hand, followed the organ-man, and his monkey and the woman into the street, where the promised parrot was to be seen. Hardly, however, had they got there, when the woman threw her shawl over Mary's head and drew her into a house close by while the organ-man did the same to Lucy. In spite of the children's stifled screams, they were hurried through this house and out by a back way, to a covered waggon which was standing there, into which both the man and woman jumped with the children; while the driver, merely nodding to the man, and saying, "You've got the kids!" drove off as rapidly as he could out of the town.

I will say nothing of the despair of Mary's mother, and of the uncle and aunt of little Lucy, when they came home at dinner-time and found the children gone. Every effort was made by the police and the neighbours to track them: advertisements were put in the papers; handbills printed, carefully describing the look and clothes of the children; a large Government reward was offered—but in vain. One child in the street had seen the organ-man enter the court with the monkey; and the house of every organ-man in London was searched, but no children were found. It seemed quite unaccountable—for why should any one steal two such young children, who could be of no use?

After a time the "nine days' wonder" ceased to occupy people's minds. A fight, ending in murder, in the same court, gave fresh work to the police on the beat, and the children's disappearance was well-nigh for-

gotten, save by the broken-hearted mother, who never ceased her prayers and supplications to Our Lord and His Blessed Mother that her child might one day be restored to her, and in the meanwhile be kept from harm.

And the poor children themselves? It was not till they were well out of the town and trotting across a common, that they were released from the coverings which had well-nigh suffocated them. Lucy had sobbed herself to sleep; but Mary's sorrow was that of an older child, and mingled too with remorse and self-reproach. Young as she was, she felt she had done wrong, and that this terrible punishment was the consequence of her disobedience to her mother's orders. Her longing for that dear mother increased every moment; and when she could speak, she could only sob out, "O take me back to mother!" A sharp blow, with a threat that if she didn't keep quiet she'd have something more to cry for, was her only answer.

So the weary day passed, and towards night they reached a place with big trees, under which there was a horse feeding and a kind of travelling caravan, where two or three men and women and some hungry-looking dogs were lounging about. Here the waggon stopped; the children were handed out, the man and woman and the organ and monkey followed, and then the waggon drove away.

Hungry and frightened, the two poor little girls began to cry again, when a man with a brutal and repulsive countenance came up to them, and, addressing the woman, said:—

"What on earth did you bring 'em so young for?"

"I suppose you wished them to be old enough to peach, and get us all put into quod!" replied the woman sneeringly.

The man turned away with an oath, and a sad-looking young woman came forward, and taking Mary's hand, exclaiming, "Why, the poor little souls must be half clemmed!" proceeded to get them some supper; and then proposed that they should go to bed in the caravan, where a kind of crib had been railed off for them.

A surly assent was given by the master of the troop; and the young woman, whose name was Kathleen, quickly carried them off to their strange sleeping-place. No sooner was she alone and free from the observation of the rest, than, to little Mary's great surprise, she threw her arms around her neck and covered her with kisses, sobbing all the time.

"O my poor lamb!" she cried, "to think that you should be brought to live with this bad lot! But I'll protect you, or my name's not Kathleen," she added, proceeding to undress the tired and bewildered little ones.

Lucy was in a dead sleep already, and soon settled down in her strange bed. But Mary, for whom Kathleen had found a nightgown about her size, stopped a moment, and then kneeling down, clasped her little hands and said: "O Jesus and Mary, help your poor child; and bless mother, and let me see her again!" and at the recollection, her tears again flowed freely. Kathleen had remained as if thunderstruck at the child's unexpected proceeding, and muttered half

to herself: "Ah! many's the day since I've heard those words, or said a bit of prayer myself, but maybe I'll begin now."

Tenderly lifting up the weeping little girl, she soothed and petted her, and laid her down gently by her little cousin; nor did she leave her till she saw that fatigue had overcome her sorrow, and that she was fast asleep.

The next morning the camp was moved very early, and the lumbering caravan was soon on its way to the nearest town, where a performance was announced in big placards for the following evening.

The strangeness and variety of their life amused the children after a bit; and it was not long before they were made to take a part in the evening's entertainment, either as "The Babes in the Wood," or "The Sleeping Beauty," for which little Mary was well fitted, being a very pretty child, with dark eyes, and a large quantity of fair hair. Their first friend Kathleen continued devoted to the children, and never lost sight of them, shielding them on all occasions from the cross words and blows of the rest. The poor woman had lost her own child, a little girl of Mary's age, and it seemed as if these new arrivals had filled up to a certain degree the aching void in her heart. She questioned Mary as to her home and her mother, and above all as to the court in which she had lived; but, unhappily, the child had never heard the name, or if she had, did not recollect it. She knew her mother was called by the neighbours "Widow Smith," but that was all Kathleen could extract from her; and Lucy, of course, knew still less.

Kathleen, however, remembered every little thing which might help some day to trace Mary's home, although it amounted to next to nothing. She found out she was a Catholic, as Kathleen herself had been, although her wild and vagrant life had well-nigh obliterated all remembrance of early teaching; and she determined that, come what may, she would keep up the habit of prayer in little Mary, and try to teach her whatever she could recollect of her own old lessons in the Catholic school. She found a very old prayer-book among her treasures, which had been a school prize, and out of that she resolved to try to teach Mary her letters. Mary knew the "Our Father" and the "Hail Mary," and said them night and morning secretly, as she had learned to be terribly afraid of every one around her save Kathleen.

So months and even years passed on. Mary and Lucy were taught to dance, and although many whippings followed the lessons, and the poor children dreaded every little accident which might in any way mar the evening's performance and bring upon them the certain and often cruel punishment afterwards, yet on the whole they acquitted themselves well. Mary distinguished herself by her graceful ways and a certain ladylike manner which was natural to her, and favourably impressed the audience.

They travelled chiefly in the north of England, attending the different fairs and race-courses; and at times the manager made a good deal of money. But there would come bad seasons and small attendances

at the performance, and then his brutal nature would show itself, and woe betide any one who came in his way! It was at such times that Kathleen redoubled her vigilance, often receiving herself the cruel cut of the whip or the heavy blow intended for the children.

But it happened one night that Kathleen fell ill, and for many days was unable to stir. It was a kind of low fever, caught in the damp marshy wood where they had been encamped. Valuable as she was to the troop, the manager would not for her sake give up an engagement he had the following week in Yorkshire; and so Kathleen was left behind until well enough to rejoin them, and sorrowfully saw the children start without her. In vain she commended them to the other two women in the caravan. They were bad and heartless, and jealous of the care which Kathleen had lavished upon the little ones.

Everything went wrong in their unfortunate expedition: it poured with rain; no one would come to the performances; and, to make it worse, Lucy had sprained her foot, and could not dance as usual, so that her performance was hissed. This brought the ill-humour of the manager to a crisis. He had drunk heavily that evening, which made him more of a brute than a man; and seizing the child when the curtain had fallen and the company had dispersed, he began flogging her unmercifully. Mary heard her agonizing cries, and rushed up to the women to go and save her; but they would not interfere, fearing he might turn upon themselves.

At last there was a silence; the man did not return,

nor was there a sign of little Lucy. After about an hour, not being able to bear the suspense any longer, Mary crept cautiously out of the caravan, and went to look for her poor little cousin. She found her at last—dead! The brute with his last lash had thrown her against the wall, and by this crowning act of barbarity had put an end to her little suffering life.

Horror and terror deprived Mary of all power of thinking for a time, and then her only idea was to escape and go to Kathleen. She was considering how she could manage this, when a well-known voice called her, and rushing forward, she found herself in the arms of Kathleen, who, feeling better, had made up her mind to rejoin them without any further delay.

To draw her aside and tell her of the terrible event of the night was a matter which in her state of terror Mary could hardly accomplish. When Kathleen had listened, horrorstruck, to the child's statement, and been taken to see poor Lucy's body, the stern and determined look which came over her face was one which Mary had never seen before. "Come with me!" was all she said. Lifting poor little Lucy in her arms, and silently followed by Mary, Kathleen marched boldly to the police station, where a light was still burning, and ringing the bell, was confronted by the superintendent himself.

"I bring you a murdered child," said Kathleen calmly, "and desire you to take up William Ruckley, the manager of the caravan in Harcourt Place, on a charge of murder, which I and this child are ready to prove."

The police hastened to the spot, but found that the man had not returned, and was still drinking at a neighbouring public-house. They lay in wait for him, however, and caught him on his return, in spite of the most savage resistance.

Kathleen and Mary were charitably taken in by a respectable woman living next door to the station; while the poor little murdered body remained in the station-house, waiting for the inquest. This was held the following day, and resulted in a charge of wilful murder against the manager. The indignation in the town against him was such, that he would have been torn limb from limb when brought before the magistrates, had he not been protected by a strong force of constabulary; and he was at once committed for trial, on a charge of murder, at the next assizes.

The whole story of the children also came out, and advertisements were put in every paper to try to trace Mary's mother, but in vain. There were too many courts in London, and too many "Widow Smiths." The old woman and the organ-man who had kidnapped them had left the troop, and gone no one knew where. But public sympathy was showered on Kathleen and Mary, and a subscription made for them till the trial was over, and something could be decided as to their future. Great anxiety was felt for little Mary, whose nerves had been so shattered by the events of that terrible night that for a long time she could not rest, and would wake continually, imploring some one to "have mercy," and evidently re-enacting the horrible murder in her dreams.

At last the trial came on; the evidence was overwhelming, and the man was condemned to be hanged, which sentence was soon after executed. The magistrates wrote to a lady who had a Catholic orphanage, asking her if she would take Mary. Their request was at once acceded to; and a respectable situation was found for Kathleen, who rejoiced in Mary's future being thus secured, although both felt the parting terribly.

"I will never forget you—no, never!" sobbed Mary, when Kathleen took leave of her at the train, which was to convey her to her new home.

"Nor I you," replied Kathleen, choking down her own emotion for the child's sake. "And when you learn to write, you must tell me how you are going on; and we will think of one another in our prayers, won't we, my darling?" added Kathleen, as, with a last kiss, she put her in the carriage, charging the guard to look after her. And so the train sped on to Mary's new home.

She did not arrive there till evening, when she was met at the station by a kind loving Sister in a large white cap, who gave her a kiss, and, taking her little bag, walked quickly away with her to the Home. There the Superior met her at the door, and took her into her own room to give her some tea, thinking she would be shy and frightened the first evening among so many other girls. The Superior knew Mary's history, and she had arranged that she should sleep at first in one of the Sisters' rooms, as she was still subject to the night-panic brought on by the murder. After talking to her a little, they took her into the chapel, the calm and beauty of which soothed poor little Mary more than

all; and then she quickly found herself undressed and put in a nice little white bed, where the fatigue of her long journey soon sent her into a sound and unbroken sleep.

We will pass over the next few years of Mary's life. At first she was very much ashamed of her backwardness in learning, for except dancing, reciting and acting, she had literally been taught nothing. But her determination to make up for lost time, and the Sisters' loving patience, at last overcame her difficulties; and before long she was able to write a very tidy letter to her faithful friend Kathleen, telling her all about her new life. The good old priest of the mission was very much pleased with Mary. Thanks to Kathleen's care, she had never forgotten her prayers, although, of course, she wanted a great deal of teaching, yet the love of Our Lord and of His Blessed Mother was always there, and with that foundation it is easy to work.

Soon she had the happiness of making her First Communion, and not long after received the Sacrament of Confirmation from the hands of the Bishop, who spoke to her very kindly afterwards, and was as much struck as every one else at her refined manners, and gentle, sweet, and modest appearance. There was always a trace of sadness in her face, the result of all she had gone through in her early years; but the children in the house all loved her, and she took special care of the little ones, whom the Sisters often entrusted to her altogether.

As she grew older, one idea only seemed to fill her heart, and that was to become herself a spouse of Our

Lord. "I have seen enough of the world," she would say, in answer to the remonstrances of her companions, who urged her to see a little "life" first. And then they were silent, for they knew something of her past history, although the Sisters had enjoined her to say as little about it as possible. It was judged advisable, both for the sake of proving her vocation and that she might earn something towards her dowry, that she should go for a time to France as nursery governess; and a nice place was found for her with the Marquise de C——, where she had the charge of a little boy and girl, whose affections she won at once.

One day her mistress told her that she was expecting her sister and the children to stay with her at the Château, and added: "I know you will be pleased, Mary, for my sister has an English nurse, a very superior person, who has brought up all her children, and for whom she has the highest regard."

The Countess D—— duly arrived. Mary and her charges were sent for and Mary was desired to take the English nurse up to show her their rooms. The face of the nurse seemed familiar to her, she knew not why; but she was still more surprised at the evident emotion she excited in this stranger, who never seemed able to take her eyes off her. The moment they were alone she seized Mary's hand, and with great agitation exclaimed:—

"Pray forgive me! but who are you? You are so like one whom I knew and loved once—and—oh!" she added, bursting into tears, "you cannot be my child - my long-lost little Mary?"

It was even so. The poor mother, when all hope of finding her child seemed over, could not bear to remain in London, or go on with the work which she had only undertaken to be able to support and make a home for her child. She had gone back to service and taken a nurse's place, as she had been a head nurse before she married Mary's father, who had only lived long enough after their union to bless her baby girl. By a wonderful sequence of events, this step had thus led to her finding her child, whom she discovered to be all that her fondest hopes had pictured—pious, modest, good, and true,—all that a mother could wish. We can imagine the joy and thankfulness on both sides, and how much Mary had to tell and her mother to hear of those terrible four or five years of suffering and trial with the travelling players; of the goodness and fidelity of poor Kathleen; and of Mary's subsequent seven years in the Orphanage. The whole story was soon made known to Mary's mistress and her sister, who rejoiced in their joy, and joined fervently in the thankful Communion which they made the following Sunday in the parish church.

One only fear harassed the Countess D——, and that was that she would lose her admirable nurse, who, she thought, would naturally wish to return to England and make a home for her child. But Mary had no secrets from her dear, long-lost mother, and very soon after their re-union she had confided to her the one wish of her heart, which was to become a Sister of Charity. Her mother was too pious and too good a Catholic to place any difficulties in the way of her

child's vocation, although it cannot be denied that the sacrifice of giving her up was a very heavy one, just when she had, as she thought, recovered her lost treasure. But she stifled what she felt would be a selfish and ungrateful return to Our Lord for His wonderful goodness and mercy, and resolved, on the contrary, to hasten Mary's admission, when her year's probation with the Marquise was over. She had saved more than enough money for the required dowry, and six months later found Mary in her little black and white dress going steadily through her novitiate at the Rue du Bac, and giving every day stronger proofs of the reality of her vocation and the solidity of her virtue.

In due course of time she took the habit, and was sent to a large manufacturing town in the north of England, not far from the scene of that terrible murder. Kathleen, who had gone as servant to an old Catholic lady who lived near, came joyfully to see "Sister Lucy," as she was called; and declared that whatever she might have done for the children had been more than repaid by the happy home she had found, and the opportunity she had had of returning to her childhood's faith, and being properly instructed in our holy religion. Together they visited poor little Lucy's grave, over which Kathleen had put a simple stone cross; and both thanked God, who out of so terrible a calamity had brought about such mercies for them all. And so we will end this true story, of which the moral surely is that those who are faithful to the least grace given them, will be rewarded a thousandfold by Him who will never be outdone in love or generosity.

THE EFFICACY OF PRAYER.

In a beautiful village in the Tyrol, not very many miles from Brixen, lived a peasant farmer with his family. Like all the people in that truly Catholic country, he was most faithful to all practices of piety, and insisted on his children following his good example. At four o'clock every morning a bell rang in the church of the village to wake the inhabitants; and at five o'clock every man, woman, and child, unless prevented by illness or other urgent cause, repaired to the village church, where an early Mass was always said for the labourers and others engaged in the fields. Each house and each field was placed under holy protection, and Franz Bauer (for so the farmer was called) never passed a wayside shrine or a crucifix without kneeling for a moment or repeating an ejaculatory prayer.

When evening came, and work was over, a low murmur might be heard in every cottage and house in the village. This was the father or mother of the family repeating the Rosary with their children—a never-failing practice throughout the Tyrol. There is no peasantry in Europe so thriving, so prosperous, so industrious, and so contented as the people of that favoured land, for in everything they put God

first. He is part of their daily life—not merely a Sunday thought, but everything is referred to Him, in trouble as in joy. Let one of the fearful thunder-storms to which that country is subject burst forth, the first thing you hear is the bell of the parish church; and you see the priest hurrying from his presbytery to the sanctuary, followed by such of the peasants as are not at work at the moment, and there offering up heartfelt prayers for his flock and their cattle, that they may be spared from the evil effects of the storm raging without.

Again, let there come any epidemic or sickness in any one of the districts, every village will turn out in procession, singing hymns and litanies, to implore the mercy of God that the scourge may be averted. Or should it be the feast-day of any of the farmers or proprietors, every one will repair to the parish church and hear Mass for him, while many will go to Communion for his intention; and then, but not till the first-fruits of the day, as it were, have thus been given to God, will the friends meet in the farmer's or proprietor's house and joyfully breakfast with him, reserving always a portion of the feast for the sick who cannot be present at the entertainment. I once lived among these people, and remember having been invited at four o'clock in the morning to a feast of this sort, preceded by Mass, by an old farmer in the heart of the mountains; and never was I more touched than by the fervent piety and simple but genuine hospitality of my host.

The hero of my story, whom I will call Ernest, had

been brought up among influences such as these. Although inclined to be wild and unruly, the wholesome chastisement of his father prevented his ever neglecting his prayers or failing to take his place in the usual catechetical instruction given by the good old parish priest of his village, so that he was thoroughly grounded in the Faith. Still his nature was wild and rebellious, and gave his good parents great anxiety. At fifteen he was apprenticed to a baker in a neighbouring town, where he learned his trade quickly, though he was often in trouble with his employers from the irregularity of his hours and his love of pleasure. But the good seed had been well sown in his heart; he was always ashamed and penitent after his escapades, and never neglected his prayers.

At twenty-one Ernest was drawn for the conscription, and entered the Austrian service, greatly to his delight. He formed part of the Austrian army of occupation in Italy, and at Castelfidardo fought valiantly for the Pope. At Ancona a bomb struck the very tree under which he stood, but he was unhurt. In spite of occasional follies and outbursts of insubordination, he was very much liked in his regiment, and always said his morning and evening prayers, with a kind of half-superstitious feeling that they would keep him from harm, no matter what he did.

His term of military service having expired, his parents wanted him to return home. But he had no mind for a quiet life; and instead of going back to the Tyrol, cast in his lot with some sailors on the Danube, who navigated that river from Pesth to Constantinople.

Ernest arrived at the latter city on Christmas Eve, and was surprised to see the whole town and shipping decked with flags for the feast, in spite of the prejudices of a Mussulman population. Here again his naturally good and pious feelings returned. His old faith came back strongly upon him, and the beautiful services of Christmas Day in the great Franciscan Church at Pera filled him with joy.

Tired of the Danube, he thought he would find work in some new channel, and very soon engaged himself as cook and baker on board a merchant vessel bound for England. On the voyage, one dark night, the watch being imperfectly kept, they were nearly run down by a large steamer. Ernest gave the alarm, and at the same time his whole heart went out in earnest prayer that the imminent danger might be averted. His prayer was heard, and they were saved, though by a hair's-breadth.

After this, the thought of his wonderful preservation amidst so many dangers steadied him for a time, and he half resolved to lead a better life. But at Liverpool where they landed, he fell in with a bad and dissolute set of young men, who led him into every kind of vice. After a time, sickened with remorse, and having spent all his money, he made his way to Manchester, where he engaged himself to a master-baker, who found him a very efficient assistant when sober. But the bad habits he had contracted at Liverpool still clung to him. In vain his master reasoned and argued; he would promise to amend, but when the temptation came, he was too weak to resist. Yet all this time he

never gave up his prayers, though often almost ashamed to draw near to the God whose laws he so constantly outraged.

During this time he fell violently in love with a young dressmaker, Mary Reynolds, whom he constantly met going to her work whilst he was on his daily rounds with the bread. She was a good girl, but a bigoted Protestant. Ernest was very good-looking and winning in manner. His knowledge of so many different countries made him more interesting and agreeable than most of the young men whom Mary had seen; and by degrees she became sincerely attached to him. For her sake he determined to become more steady and save some money, so as to set up a baker's shop on his own account; and this after some months he was able to do.

After testing his steadiness in this way for some little time, Mary's mother consented to the marriage, but on condition that it should be in a Protestant church. At first his old faith rebelled against this idea; but at last his love overcame his scruples, and he consented to do as they wished, though with certain misgivings of conscience which he could not stifle.

All went on well for a time, and Mary was about to become a mother, when unhappily some of his old Liverpool friends found him out, and led him once more into bad ways. Thoroughly ashamed of himself, he took to drinking again to drown thought; and after a short time was engaged in a drunken brawl, taken up by the police, tried before the magistrates, and condemned to a year's imprisonment.

His despair may be imagined; but it was the hour of God's grace. When alone in his cell, he had leisure to think over his past life; how, little by little, he had been led on, till it had come to this—that he was a convict, his fair name disgraced for ever, endless opportunities thrown away, God's grace slighted, his religious duties unfulfilled, the careful teaching of his childhood thrown away.

True, he had always prayed; he had even withstood the jeers of his new Protestant relations at his devotion to Our Lady, and had insisted, in spite of his wife's ridicule, on keeping her image by his bedside. But now he began to pray in earnest, and with his whole heart for mercy and forgiveness for the past, and for strength to keep his good resolutions. He obtained permission to see the Catholic chaplain of the gaol, and to him he made a general confession of his whole life, and received the absolution for which his soul so earnestly craved.

From that moment he was a changed man, and accepted all the hardships of his imprisonment almost joyfully, as an atonement for his past sins. Little by little his prayers became almost continual; even during the hours of labour he prayed constantly in his heart, till his whole countenance was changed, and even the warders remarked it. But he was always humble and silent—never breaking a prison rule, but denying himself even in the food he took, to give it to the other prisoners, and bearing their mockery and sneers without a word. He had much to endure likewise from the gaoler, who looked upon him, not unnaturally perhaps,

as an arrant hypocrite, and never missed an opportunity of being harsh and unjust towards him. But all this he bore without a murmur, saying it was less than he deserved; and this willing acceptance of suffering, and continual union with God brought him untold consolation. He became filled with God's grace, and an example to all around him, although he knew it not.

At last the year was over, and he was free. His first impulse was to go to the nearest Catholic church and pour out before the tabernacle his sincere penitence and heartfelt thanksgivings. Then he sought his home. It had vanished. His wife had sold the shop and the business, and gone to live with her Protestant mother, who had taken her back into her own home, and had done her utmost to poison her mind against him.

Their first meeting was most painful. She had dropped all communication with him from the first moment of his disgrace; and now it seemed as if her heart were for ever steeled against him. He asked to see his child—the boy born during his imprisonment.

This could not be denied him, and his tears fell like rain over his baby's face. This sight somewhat softened Mary, and to his next eager question as to whether it had been baptized she answered in the affirmative, but added, "In the Protestant church." This was indeed a bitter punishment for his sin, but he did not lose heart; he felt that all could be repaired by prayer and patience.

His next object was to get work, and that again was very difficult—who would take him without a character? At Manchester he was too well known, so he resolved

to try his fate in London. After many struggles and many bitter disappointments, he at last succeeded; and by steadiness and perseverance won the respect and esteem of his employers. By degrees he made enough money to set up once more a respectable home; and, after many fruitless attempts, at last prevailed upon Mary to come back to him with their child. She had no cause to repent the step, for his loving patience and gentleness with her knew no bounds. His life was indeed an edification to all around him: first at Mass, and then at his work, not a moment was left unemployed; while, when he came home, his leisure-time was spent either in teaching his children, or in helping the poor and sick around them.

His wife could not but be won by so consistent and holy a life; but she missed the key to it all—her Protestant prejudices were as strongly rooted as ever, and all his prayers seemed fruitless. He at last obtained her consent, however, to the conditional baptism of their first child in the Catholic Church; and she made no objection to the baptism of the rest as he wished.

On the whole, their lives were very happy. Everything seemed to prosper which he undertook; their business rapidly increased; soon they were able to take a larger house and keep a servant. Their children grew up strong and healthy, and above all, good and pious, trained most carefully by their father, who took care especially that their prayers should never be neglected. Ernest himself had joined the Confraternity of the Holy Family, and had become a member of the Society of St Vincent de Paul. His influence among

young working men was very great, especially in persuading them to refrain from drink, and to go to their duties. Often when Ernest found one or other of them reckless and wild, as he himself had been, he would coax him to come home with him; and by putting forth all his powers of interesting and amusing his guest, would draw him away from temptation, and induce him to lead a steady and respectable life. The number of souls whom he thus rescued will never be known until the day when all secrets shall be revealed.

Yet all this time Mary remained unconvinced. She could not but be struck by her husband's goodness, yet it seemed to have no effect upon her as regarded her faith. She went steadily alone to the Protestant chapel which she had attended on first coming to London, unheeding the many yearning looks often cast upon her by her husband and children. Yet he prayed on, and as the children grew older, he made them join in his petitions. All his toils, all his sufferings, were offered up for this one end—*i.e.*, her conversion. He never argued with her, but tried by every kind of tenderness and love to win her over to the truth.

At last, when he had almost given up hope, God brought about the matter in a totally unexpected way. Mary had taken as a servant a little Catholic girl (herself a convert) whose appearance and manner had struck her at first sight. She was very simple and modest, but withal had plenty of good sense and heavenly wisdom. Her straightforward honesty made a very favourable impression upon Mary, and she occasionally asked her questions regarding the Catholic

Faith, which a kind of false shame prevented her asking her husband. Bit by bit, the prejudices of a lifetime melted away before the simple, earnest words of this poor servant-girl. Then Mary's pride came in the way; how could she own herself in the wrong after "holding out," as she called it, for so many years?

It was the Month of Mary. As we have said before, Ernest's whole life was one of prayer; but this month he determined, if possible, to take heaven by storm, as it were, to obtain the much-coveted grace. The days passed on, and nothing seemed gained. Yet during that very time, unknown to husband or children, Mary, led by her little maid, was going daily to a good old priest, to be instructed in our holy religion.

The last day of the month came; and Ernest, as usual, went to the church with his children for their daily Mass.

There is a little delay. Ernest is sad at heart, and feels as if it were his own old sins which are keeping this grace from his dear wife. Still he prays on. Presently the priest comes up to him and whispers, smiling:—

"I am afraid the Mass will be a little later to-day, for we have an abjuration first at Our Lady's altar. Will you assist at it?"

Ernest mechanically follows him to a side-altar, where a female figure is kneeling at a *prie-dieu* in the middle. He looks at her. Can he be dreaming? No; it is a gown, a bonnet, he knows well. Overcome by emotion, he draws nearer and sees her face—the face of his own Mary!

"I Go Straight to Christ"

A DIALOGUE.

BY THE REV. F. M. DE ZULUETA, S.J.

"*I* GOES straight to Christ, my Saviour, in all *my* soul's needs, Mr. Haughton," earnestly protested Simpkins, as he rested awhile from his work, leaning upon his spade, and glancing sideways at the priest who stood beside him.

Dan Simpkins was a job-gardener, and at the time of this conversation was digging up the beds in the presbytery garden belonging to the Rev. Aloysius Haughton, Catholic priest of Durnstone, in the county of Linkshire.

It was a Saturday afternoon, and Simpkins had previously sent a message to his reverence, through the housekeeper, to the effect that he wished to speak with the "reverend gentleman" about the planting of some seeds. The priest, being detained hearing the confessions of his flock, had tarried somewhat, and on coming out into the garden had excused himself to Simpkins.

"You know it's Saturday afternoon, Dan, and I've been busy with my work in the confessional. It has to be done, Simpkins, though you don't agree with people going to the priest for the forgiveness of their sins."

It was this remark of Father Haughton's that had elicited the gardener's protest, "*I* goes straight to Christ, my Saviour, in all *my* soul's needs, sir."

"Quite right too, Dan," rejoined the priest cheerily; "so do I, so do my people. You don't

suppose we Catholics try to go to Him crooked, do you?"

"Ah! but you're just a-joking like with me now, Mr. Haughton. You don't take me according to my meaning. What I mean is, I want to go *straight* like, without the interference of any priest or ablutions" —he meant "absolution"—"as you call it. I objects to all go-betweens, as it were, standing 'twixt my soul and the Almighty."

"My dear Simpkins——"

"Excuse me, sir, for interrupting. The sacred book teaches us that Christ is the 'one Mediator of God and men.' That's Scripture, I fancy. So I goes straight to Him, sir, and not to nobody else; and I should just like to hear what you've got to say agin that, Mr. Haughton," and the brave Dan resumed his digging vigorously, as though he had said the last word on the subject.

"Well, my man," rejoined the priest in an amused tone of voice, "I think I've got a good deal to say, not against the Word of God, but against your reading of it, and the conclusions you seek to draw from it. Now, first of all, you have used a very big word—'mediator.' Can you tell me, Simpkins, what 'mediator' means?"

Simpkins paused in his work and scratched his head a bit. Like many of his kind he knew a fair number of snatches of texts out of his Bible, but had no very clear or accurate knowledge of their meaning, and still less of their surrounding context. They sounded all right to him—they seemed to contradict some of the teachings of "them Papists" (or, rather, his notions of what they taught). But when confronted with the simple question as to the meaning of the term "mediator," he found himself at a loss.

"Well, Mr. Haughton, it means the Saviour somehow, but I don't know as I can tell you much more nor that about it."

The priest smiled kindly.

"I'll tell you what it means, Dan, in a minute.

Remember you declared just now that you wanted no *go-betweens* 'twixt your soul and Almighty God."

"I did, sir; and I holds to that."

"All right. But you do really want to get near to God, I suppose?"

"Aye, sir, and that's just why I goes straight to Him, I should say. I see no good in going round-about."

"In that case I'm afraid, my man," quietly replied Father Haughton, with a merry twinkle in his eye—"I'm *very* much afraid you'll *have* to put up with a go-between in order to get to God."

"Not I, sir."

"Why, Simpkins, don't you know that 'mediator' means just what you say you won't have. It *means* a 'go-between'! Our Lord is Himself a go-between. Won't you have *Him?*"

Simpkins stared with his mouth wide open.

"Do you mean that, sir—honour bright? For I'm only a poor chap without any larnin'."

"Seriously, Dan, for I wouldn't deceive you. 'Mediator' means a person intervening between two parties—a go-between in fact."

Simpkins felt as though he were not being fairly treated.

"Ah, sir, but that's different somehow! That's not the kind of go-between I objects to. You see the great Mediator—the Saviour—was really God Himself as well as man. So He's not exactly betwixt and between us and God somehow—though maybe I can't put it in the right words."

"Oh yes, your meaning is quite plain. You mean, don't you, that since our Saviour was God He can't be regarded as something *between you* and God?"

"Just so, sir. Accordingly I makes straight for Him, and won't have nothing else between me and Him."

"Well, my friend, but it isn't *as* God that He is your mediator, but as *man*. Your Bible speaks of Him as the 'Mediator of God and men, the *man*

Christ Jesus,' doesn't it? So it is in His *human* nature—a distinct thing from His Divine nature—that He is a go-between. As *man* therefore He *is* something *intervening* between you and God. You talk of our going straight to God. But God did not come straight *to us*, but by means of the human nature which He took. Those that went to Christ while He was on earth didn't see the Divinity itself, didn't come in direct contact with the Godhead itself, but merely saw the human nature, and only through His wonderful works did they get to believe in His unseen Divinity. I hope you follow me, Simpkins?"

"I'm afeared you dumfounder me a bit with your argufying. All I say is, I'm going straight to Christ and don't agree with no betwixts and betweens a-hinderin' o' me. It's the same in trade. Middlemen is bad. They swallows up the profits and makes things dear to get and labour ill-paid. No, sir, I goes straight to my Saviour."

It is always hard to argue with an uneducated person if he be a man of small intelligence. Just when you are gradually bringing him to the point he gets puzzled and perplexed from the strain put upon his slender powers of concentration, thinks you are trying to mystify him with mere language, and so, to save himself, harks back doggedly to his first statement, regardless of what you have urged against it, and what he has already half granted. All this Father Haughton fully appreciated. He must therefore deal with Simpkins after another fashion.

"Look here, Simpkins. You say you will have nothing placed between you and your Saviour?"

"I rather fancy I did say that same—just a *few* times, Mr. Haughton," the gardener knowingly replied.

"But, Simpkins, you know that old song, 'Where are you going to, my pretty maid?' and the saucy reply of the maiden, 'Nobody asked you, sir, she said'?"

"I do, sir; and you should just hear my Arabella

Susan sing it. It's a treat to hear the lass, it is. But what has that to do with my objection to your go-betweens?"

"This much, Dan, '*Nobody asked you, sir,*' what you would have, or what you wouldn't have. You speak as if it was your right to settle for yourself the conditions of access to Christ."

Simpkins seemed a trifle taken aback by this way of looking at the matter.

"You see," urged the priest in all seriousness, "it is an immense condescension on Our Lord's part that He—the great God of heaven and earth—should allow you and me to go to Him *at all,* isn't it?"

"I'm not denying that, sir. Who could, as remembers how he's made up of naught but sinfulness and worms? But if He says, 'Come to *Me,* all ye that labour and are heavy laden'—well, it's His goodness to be sure—but then I *comes,* and comes as straight as an arrer."

"Then, since it's a favour that He lets you come at all, I suppose you mustn't presume to settle for yourself, still less dictate to Him, in what way or by what road you will approach him? Beggars mustn't be choosers—eh, Simpkins?"

"That's right enough, sir. But it stands to sense as the road He means me to take ain't one with all sorts of hindrances and obstacles along it. As you said awhile since, we don't want to go to Him crooked like. And we *must* do, if there are them go-betweens in the road. It's like this, sir," pursued Dan, waxing eloquent and gesticulating. "If you puts a big stack o' hay afore your front door, and I wants to get in, I *have* to go crooked like, haven't I?"

"To be sure, Dan; but why? Because the haystack you have taken for your example is not only *something between* you and the entrance, but is, besides, an *obstacle*—a *hindrance preventing* free access."

"Well, and aren't I just a-saying as how I don't want any such hindrances between me and Christ?"

"Hindrances, no. But is a thing standing between you and what you wish to reach always and neces-

sarily a *hindrance* to your reaching it? Certainly not, and that's where your mistake lies. You take for granted that a go-between is something *in your way*—a hindrance *preventing* free access to Our Lord?"

"Begging your pardon, sir, I don't see my *h*error."

"It's easily seen, Simpkins, by means of a few simple examples. Your haystack *is* a hindrance. But let us take other things. For instance, the telegraph wires between our village of Durnstone and London. They are go-betweens — something between us and the great city. But they are *helps*, not *hindrances*, and you found them to be so last week when you asked me to wire for you to St. George's Hospital for news of your poor boy Harry, after his dreadful operation. The bridge connecting Durnstone with Watfield-cum-Stork is a go-between, but not a *hindrance* when you wish to go from here on Fridays to your gardening job at Watfield Manor. When workmen are 'on strike' they send delegates to their masters as mediators or go-betweens. But the men don't look upon them as *hindrances*, but as *helps* for obtaining better terms from the masters."

Our friend Simpkins saw the force of these illustrations, but still was not prepared to strike his colours at once. "Any way, Mr. Haughton," he insisted, "this going to a priest for getting one's sins pardoned *is* a hindrance, when one can go straight to the Saviour's feet instead, like that sinful woman in the Gospel."

"Don't be quite so sure about that, my man. That depends. What if your Saviour has chosen to *enjoin* confession as the road by which you are to go to His feet for pardon? If—mind you, I only say *if*, for the present—*if* He has, then Confession is not like the hindering haystack, but is more like the helping telegraph or bridge, and the priest more like the union delegate or mediator. Supposing that our Lord made this arrangement, then you mustn't say you won't have it. Why, it would be the *one appointed way* of getting His pardon."

"I don't believe Christ made any such arrangement as that, sir."

"That is another matter altogether, Dan. I only say that *if* He did, the practice of Confession, although something *between* you and your Saviour's forgiveness, would not be a *hindrance*, but an indispensable *help*."

"But, sir, I can't believe it's like the Saviour to give us His graces by other means—round the corner like—instead of giving them Himself direct."

"Oh, come, Simpkins! You ought to know your Bible better than that! The Bible tells us of several cases where Our Lord has promised, or given, His graces by other means, and not direct and, as it were, with His own hands. For example: '*Except ye be baptized again of water and the Holy Ghost ye shall not enter into the kingdom of God.*"

"Right you are, sir. I know them words."

"Then, here we have an indirect means—Baptism—set down as necessary for reaching the kingdom of God. If you stuck to your guns you would have to say nay to that, and declare that you would go straight to Christ without the interference of Baptism."

"That does seem so, Mr. Haughton."

"Then, again, Simpkins, how did the Christians in the beginning arrive at the truth of Christ?"

"I've always understood they were taught the faith '*which is in Christ Jesus*' by the apostiles."

"Quite true, Dan—the apostles taught them. So *they* didn't go straight to Christ for His truth. They got it indirectly—through His appointed messengers. '*Ye shall be witnesses to Me*,' our Lord had told them."

"But them early Christians surely rested their faith on the word of Christ Himself?"

"How on earth could they when they never heard Him? He had withdrawn His visible presence from this world and had gone up to heaven. He left His apostles as go-betweens to take His place. You remember His words to them: '*He that heareth you heareth Me: and he that despiseth you despiseth Me*'"

"So He did, sir. And I'm free to confess, sir, after all, that somehow the Bible does seem to tell us of a good many go-betweens betwixt us and the Saviour."

"Ah! just so," replied Father Haughton. "But, Dan, we haven't quite done with them yet. You know, of course, there are religious ceremonies called 'Sacraments,' don't you?"

"That's so, sir," replied Simpkins; "but I don't agree to all *your* lot."

"I know that well enough," quietly rejoined the priest, repressing a feeling of annoyance at Simpkins's rude way of speaking of Catholic practices. "But even your Prayer Book declares that there are at least *two* 'Sacraments of the gospel,' and that these are 'generally necessary for salvation'—viz., Baptism and the Lord's Supper—mark the words, please, 'necessary for salvation'—which must mean 'necessary to get to Christ.'"

"So I'm told, Mr. Haughton—not that I'm much of a Churchman myself. I goes mornings to the Church of England with my wife, and evenings mostly to the Wesleyan Chapel."

"Well, but even Wesleyans use Baptism and the 'Lord's Supper,' do they not?"

"That's true enough, sir."

"That will do for my purpose, Simpkins. Now, presumably, Baptism and the Lord's Supper are considered by these people to be, *in some sense*, means by which they receive spiritual blessings from Christ. These 'Sacraments,' administered by clergymen or ministers, are not Christ, so they must be something between the soul and Christ, by means of which He confers favours upon men's souls."

"That looks right enough, sir."

"Then why don't you also object to these 'Sacraments of the Gospel,' and say, I will go straight to Christ for His favours?"

"Well, Mr. Haughton, I suppose that's because the Saviour made these here 'Sacraments,' and willed us to use them."

"Ah! Good! Now we are getting on nicely,

Simpkins. So, then, there are *some* go-betweens after all? Even you Protestants *don't* go quite straight and direct to Christ in all things, but through means, or helps, fixed by Him. Now, Dan, when we began talking religion this afternoon I fancy you said *you did* go straight?"

"Ah! well, sir," wriggled Simpkins, "I must allow there *was* a bit of a mistake there, somehow. But anyhow, sir," persisted the gallant Dan, undismayed and with revived animation, "the Lord didn't mean sinful people to get to Him by confessing their sins to a priest. *That's* not one of the means *He* fixed on."

"As I told you before, Dan, that is a *further* question yet to be settled. We can talk about it if you like. All I wanted to show just now was that for you to say 'I'll go straight to Christ!—no go-betweens for me!' doesn't square with your own Protestant religion. For that religion itself teaches that Christ has appointed *some* go-betweens as 'generally necessary for salvation,' or at least as means for obtaining His blessings. It is quite clear, therefore, that whatever other objections you *may* have against Confession, you cannot object to it *solely* because it is something between the soul and Christ. For such an objection, as I have shown you, would tell equally against those other go-betweens which Protestants *accept* as instituted by Christ. The only reasonable thing for you to say now is that although Christ did ordain *some* go-betweens, Confession and Absolution is not *one* of the number."

"And that's just what I've been saying all along, sir!"

"Pardon me, Simpkins—*one* of the things you've been saying, but not what you *began* by saying, which was, 'I object to *all* go-betweens as hindrances.'"

Simpkins looked somewhat crestfallen, for he was honest enough to recognise that so far the Catholic priest was right.

"Never mind, Dan. My object isn't to gain a victory, but to remove misunderstandings from your

mind. At all events, you grant now that the general statement you started with was a mistaken one."

"Well, sir, I suppose it was," frankly admitted the gardener.

"Good! We've come to this, then. Did Our Lord, as a matter of fact, appoint Confession as the means by which we were to receive His pardon for our personal sins during life, or did He not?"

"I can't for the life o' me see as He needed to do no such thing," Simpkins demurred, but with somewhat less confidence than he had hitherto shown. "You see, Mr. Haughton, I looks at it this wise: When I sins I offends God, not the priest. So what has the priest to do with forgiving my sin? It don't seem like minding his own business like—not as I means no disrespect to you, sir?"

"But I never said, Simpkins," replied Father Haughton, with some amusement, "that the priest forgave sins on his own account. Absolving means conveying *God's* forgiveness in God's name and by His commission."

"I should fancy, sir, that the Almighty can do that well enough without the priest a-interferin'."

"Can! Why of course He *can*. Nobody denies that. But the question is: *Does* He? *Will* He? You might as well say that Our Lord *could* have healed the ten lepers without referring them to the priests. He could, and yet it was only 'as they went' that they were cured. Or you might say the apostles were interfering by preaching Christ's gospel for Him because He *could* have conveyed His truths to men without any such aid. He certainly *could*—but He didn't. Christ *could* grant us admission to the kingdom of heaven without our being 'baptized of water and the Holy Ghost'—but He won't; for He makes baptism a condition. Many Protestant objections against the Catholic Faith come from their not seeing the difference between Our Lord's power to do a thing, if He chose, and His actually choosing to do it. The Christian religion is not a matter of what *might have been*. It is a question

of fact—what Christ has actually willed to make it."

"You're going a deal too deep for the likes o' me, sir, with your choppin' o' logs."

'Chopping logic, I think you mean, Dan. Not at all. It's quite simple—like this. You've got a boy called George, I think?"

Simpkins assented.

"Well, you tell him: 'George, my boy, if you take this letter to Squire Hawkins for me, I'll let you off the thrashing I promised you for cheeking your mother last night.'"

"I'm blessed if he'd get off as cheap as that."

"Well, let us suppose he would," said the priest, laughing. "George runs the errand, the Squire learns from him the state of affairs at home. He says to the lad: 'Why had you to bring that letter to escape the thrashing? Couldn't your father have let you off without?' George replies: 'Aye, Squire, he *could*, but I guess he *won't*.'"

Simpkins showed his thorough appreciation of the sentiment by an audible chuckle. "I see, sir," he replied, "what you're after. You mean it didn't matter to George's skin what I *could* have done, but what he knew I *would* do?"

"Just so, Dan. And now you'll understand more easily what I am trying to explain to you. Our Lord could pardon our sins without sending us to the priest for confession. But it doesn't benefit your soul or mine to know what He could do: The important question for us both is what He *chooses* to do."

"Now, I follow you, sir."

"Good. Now, I was saying that this difference between Our Lord's power and His will runs all through the Christian religion—a point you Protestants seem often to forget. Our Lord made peace between God and men by dying on the Cross. Yet He might have brought about this reconciliation in other ways. Are we allowed, on this account, to say He did not die for us—because He needn't? No. Again, God knows our needs perfectly without our

telling Him in our prayers, and could relieve them without the asking. But He will not. 'Ask,' He says, 'and ye shall receive,' &c. So, too, it is no argument against Confession to say that Our Lord *could* forgive us without any priestly intervention. And the Catholic is quite ready to show you out of your own Bible that although He could dispense with the priest's absolution He does not choose to do so. The Queen could send a reprieve to a condemned criminal of herself. But that is not the appointed way. The pardon has to come through the Home Secretary and again through the gaol authorities."

"Well, Mr. Haughton," replied Dan, "maybe you're right, so far. Yet some'ow I can't swallow that Confession business. It don't seem nateral like to be telling all you've done wrong to a fellow sinner like yourself. For I suppose a priest—savin' your pardon—is only a frail man like the rest of us."

"Undoubtedly he is, and so the priest has to go to Confession himself—even the Pope has to tell his sins to a priest and get forgiveness. For though he cannot err in teaching the Church, *he can sin* in his own conduct. But are you right in considering such confidences made to a fellow-sinner unnatural?"

"That's my opinion, sir."

"I'm surprised at that, Dan. You often read in your newspaper how some murderer, hitherto undetected, delivers himself up to the police of his own accord, and voluntarily confesses his crime, though he knows he'll be hanged for it. Why, sometimes a man who is in a low, depressed state of mind, will even confess to the police a crime which he is afterwards found never to have committed. Nevertheless he finds relief in accusing himself, though the crime is quite imaginary. Don't we often find comfort in unbosoming ourselves to a friend when we are in trouble? All this looks like a natural inclination to make known the secrets of our lives to others, doesn't it?"

"But that's very different, I fancy, from going to a fellow-creature for *forgiveness*," objected Simpkins.

"Yes, Dan, very different indeed, I grant you.

For while the priest of God, in virtue of powers received from Christ, will rid you of your trouble altogether, the police will get a man hanged; while the priest is bound by an inviolable bond of secrecy never to give the least hint to a living soul of what you tell him in Confession, not even to save his own life, a neighbour confidant may not always be quite so particular; in certain circumstances he may even honestly think himself called upon to use the knowledge confided to him. There is a difference indeed, but all in favour of Confession as practised in the Catholic Church."

"That's all very well, sir," answered Simpkins, "if the priest could forgive sins; but of course he can't do nothin' of the sort. 'Who can forgive sins, but only God,' says the Bible."

"Excuse me, Dan, it was the malicious, unbelieving Pharisees who said *that*—not the Bible that teaches it as a truth. The Bible only records the words as a saying of Christ's enemies. Moreover, Our Blessed Lord reproved the Pharisees for this secret murmuring, and then worked an astounding miracle—the cure of the paralytic—to confound their reasoning. But we are not now discussing the reality or the sham of priestly absolution. You were saying just now that confession to a fellow-sinner was unnatural. I am trying to show you by examples that, on the contrary, it agrees with man's natural instinct and feeling."

"Then, sir, how is it that other Christians don't seem to have the same feeling? Aren't they human beings as much as the Roman Catholics?"

"To be sure they are, Dan. But are you quite sure they *don't* show the same inclination? Just look at the 'Visitation of the Sick' in your Book of Common Prayer. There you'll find the following direction given to the Protestant sick man: '*Here shall the sick person be moved to make a special confession of his sins, if he feel his conscience troubled with any weighty matter. After which the Priest shall absolve him (if he humbly and heartily desire it) after this sort.*' Then

follows the form of absolution: 'Our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath left power in His Church to absolve all sinners who truly repent and believe in Him, of His great mercy forgive thee thine offences: And *by His authority committed to me, I absolve thee from all thy sins*, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen.' Surely that looks like telling one's sins to a fellow-sinner in order to get them forgiven."

Dan Simpkins had listened to this extract from his Prayer Book with blank astonishment.

"Why, Mr. Haughton, sir," he exclaimed, "are *them* words really in our Prayer Book? I'm blest if I ever heard of them afore!"

"Very likely not, and this is not the first time, Dan, that I have found a member of your Church ill acquainted with his own Prayer Book. If your co-religionists only studied it more closely, they would not remain long where they are."

"Well now, just to think o' that," pursued Simpkins, still wrapped in wonderment; "and there was our vicar a-telling us the other night that them High Church folk had no business to be holding confessionals and forgiving sins! Why, he can't know his Prayer Book, he can't!"

"Well, Simpkins, as to that, we Catholics give another and a better reason why Anglican clergymen should not attempt to hear confessions, namely, that as they are not real priests at all they have no more power to forgive sins in Christ's name than you have, or, let us say, Mrs. Simpkins."

"That's a good joke, Mr. Haughton," said Dan laughingly. "You're right there. My missus ain't at all good at forgiving sins, least of all her husband's, I can tell yer."

"But, Dan, we are wandering from the point. At all events, those who drew up the 'Visitation of the Sick' recognized the natural desire of men to communicate their spiritual troubles to others. So does the Bible where it says, 'Confess ye your sins one to another.'"

"Any way, Mr. Haughton, there are many other sorts of Christians what don't feel this nateral inclination you speak of. There are them Dissenters, who——"

"Dissenters!" interrupted the priest, "why, they show exactly the same feeling. You know that some of them, like the Methodists, Salvationists, and others, have what they call 'pastoral confidences' and 'class meetings,' in which people acknowledge their sins and manifest their spiritual troubles. It is much the same thing in another form, only not so private as Confession, not so safe for the penitent as regards secrecy, and besides, he has not the prospect of a sure pronouncement of forgiveness."

Simpkins did not see his way to insisting any longer on the unnatural character of Confession.

"Well, sir," he said at last, "whether Confession be a hindrance or unnateral or otherwise, you've yet to show me as 'ow the Lord wished us to confess to a priest, and gave him power to forgive our sins."

"Quite right, my man. That is the main point—indeed it is the only point that really matters. For if Confession is Our Lord's arrangement, why, we must just knock under, and that's all about it. If He commands you and me to tell our sins as a condition of forgiveness, then it's sheer waste of time to be discussing whether Confession is a hindrance or unnatural or unpleasant—as no doubt it is. A man who earnestly desires to save his soul and gain heaven must accept His terms and not make them according to his own liking. For Our Lord is the master. He is also our Redeemer, and it is for Him, not for us, to settle by what means the saving fruits of His passion and death shall be applied to our individual souls for the remission of sins."

"No one can gainsay that, sir," assented Dan Simpkins, "but *is* Confession the means He fixed on?"

"Most certainly, Dan, and this can be clearly shown from the Gospels. But," added the priest, looking at his watch, "I fear I cannot spare more

time this afternoon. We can talk the matter over another day. All I wanted this afternoon was to show you how false is the Protestant rule: 'I go straight to Christ, no go-betweens for me.' But if you are in a hurry to learn how confession to a priest can be proved from Our Lord's words in the New Testament, you can run down to the Watfield Barracks, and speak to Sergeant Jones. He'll tell you of the long 'talks about Confession' which he had with a Catholic priest before his conversion."[1]

"Sergeant Jones become a Romanist! And yet he's a square-headed chap too is the sergeant."

"That's the reason perhaps why he was converted," put in the priest quietly. "Don't suppose that Protestants have the monopoly of brains, Dan."

"Well, who knows," replied the gardener, shaking his head philosophically, "perhaps I may go that way myself some of these days, sir."

"Please God, you will, though you are a long way out of it as yet. But remember, Dan, that those who need special light to guide them through the worrying perplexities of religious inquiry must pray *earnestly* and *humbly* for it. True, a man must use the reason God has given him, but argument will never suffice by itself. Earnest prayer will often do in ten minutes what discussion would not accomplish in ten years. Goodbye, Dan." And Father Haughton returned to the presbytery.

[1] *Sergeant Jones' Talks about Confession*, by Rev. G. Bampfield, Catholic Truth Society, 69 Southwark Bridge Road, London, S.E.

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